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# The Adopted Son

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BERTHA HURWITZ



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THE ADOPTED SON



# *The Adopted Son*

*A Play in Four Acts*

*By*

*Bertha Hurwitz*  
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1920

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DEDICATED, IN MY YEAR OF MOURNING, TO THE MEMORY OF  
MY BELOVED FATHER,  
RABBI LOUIS HURWITZ,  
WHO LIVED TO SEE THIS PLAY JUST COMPLETED, BUT NOT  
APPROVED.

# The Adopted Son

## CAST OF CHARACERS

in order of appearance

ROMA — *mistress of the house of Rome.*

PAGAN — *daughter of Roma.*

JUDAH — *the adopted son; son of Palestine.*

CHRISTIAN — *born in the house of Palestine.*

PREJUDICE — *son of Ignorance.*

ESPANIA — *mistress of the house of Spain.*

DON ESPANIA — *son of Espania.*

IGNORANCE — *old hag.*

SUPERSTITION — *son of Ignorance and twin brother of Prejudice.*

FANATICISM }  
HYPOCRISY } — *relatives of Ignorance.*

ASSIMILATION — *adventurous beauty.*

LA BELLE FRANCE — *mistress of the house of France.*

FRANK — *son of La Belle.*

PRUSSIAN — *son of Germany.*

COLUMBIA — *mistress of the house of America.*

YANKEE }  
ITALIAN }  
SCHOLAR } — *inmates of her house.*  
INDOLENCE }  
FARMER }

LIBERTY }  
JUSTICE } — *female characters.*

## ACT I

### ROME

*(Curtain rises.)*

*(Dais entrance in centre. On throne at right of dais sits Roma, mistress of the house. Standing at her right, Pagan, daughter of Roma. Exits, right and left. Window at right. Servants at all doors and on each side of throne. Clamor of many voices heard without.)*

*(Enter right, servant; bows.)*

ROMA: What news?

SERVANT: One of your messengers is returning, Mother Roma. It is not yet ascertained whether with success of your mission or not.

ROMA: Do you know which one of my messengers, and whence he comes?

SERVANT: It is not known; there are conflicting conjectures. Some think from the house of Egypt, some from Assyria, and some from Palestine.

*(Enter centre, second servant; bows.)*

ROMA *(To second servant)*: What have you to tell?

SECOND SERVANT: It is one of your servants returning triumphant with much spoil; but he has sent ahead a messenger to say that to you alone will he report all. He is even now entering the gates.

ROMA *(To both servants)*: Go out to meet him and command him to come hither without delay. *(Servants bow and exeunt right.)*

PAGAN *(Running to door at right, excitedly)*: Mother,

## THE ADOPTED SON

mother, see how he comes triumphant with chariot and slaves! What a large amount of spoils he brings; how brilliant they are and how they sparkle in the sun! Now I shall have more gold and jewels to sew on my headband and dress. (*Runs back to mother.*) I can hardly wait until they arrive!

ROMA: Yes, Pagan, my beautiful daughter, you shall have gold and jewels for your adornment. To all the houses in the neighborhood have I sent my messengers, with commands to bring back all available materials, to destroy houses and inmates if necessary, for everything must belong to us. Then you, the most beautiful of all their children, shall rule supreme and they shall serve you, while the spoils shall be used to make our home still more beautiful, that all may envy us and recognize our power.

(*Enter warrior, right; drags by the hand youth—Judah,—who is dressed in torn garments, hair disheveled, dust-covered and exhausted. Judah holds with tenacity book under arm.*)

MESSENGER (*Bowing*): Worthy Mother Roma, I have returned successful from the errand upon which you sent me. Behold the booty I have brought back from the house across the river.

ROMA: And who is this youth you hold by the hand?

MESSENGER: This is Judah, the son of Palestine (*throwing him roughly at her feet.*) Bow to your mistress, slave, for you are to serve her henceforth.

ROMA (*Giving Judah but a glance*): And did you have great difficulty in attaining your end?

MESSENGER: That I did. You will find this youth very obstinate. He would not realize that I was the stronger and that it was useless to try resistance against me. Many times I offered him conditions, but he would accept none. Many servants they had in the house, and they fought long

## THE ADOPTED SON

and desperately to defend it. But who can expect to oppose the strength of the servants of Roma?

I was finally compelled to kill his mother, (*groan from Judah*) and completely to destroy their house. All their wealth I have appropriated and it is indeed immense. What I could not take I destroyed. The gardens and vineyards I cut down, and the entire estate I laid waste.

ROMA: You have done well! Go now, and have the valuables placed in the treasure-house.

MESSENGER: In all haste I obey! (*Bows, exit right.*)

ROMA: So, it is but a fight for supremacy. If you do not rob your neighbor, your neighbor will rob you. And who is more fit to rule than I and my household? I must rule supreme! (*Judah has risen during conversation and stands with head raised defiantly, holding book with both hands.*) Come hither youth! Look not so defiant. You must make up your mind to bow to the inevitable. I do not intend to harm you, however. But you are in my house and must bow to my will. As long as you perform your duties as directed and act faithfully to the house, you shall be treated kindly. What is that book you carry?

JUDAH (*Changing from defiance to supplication*): Pray, pray, worthy Madam, do not deprive me of my book. It is all I have left to remind me of my poor mother. You have taken all; leave me this one relic which I value above every thing else.

ROMA: I have no desire to take your book from you. You will find that I encourage study of any nature. The members of my household are not ignorant like your own neighbors. We have a love for the wise and beautiful and have many books in our house, too. Now, as you are doubtless tired and spent, you may go into the next room and rest awhile. You will find there new clothes, and you may dress yourself in the garb of my house.

## THE ADOPTED SON

Comè, my daughter, we will go down and look over the valuables. (*Exeunt Roma and Pagan, centre. All servants follow in double file behind.*)

JUDAH (*Left alone, comes down centre of stage, with head hanging. Falls on knees, and in weeping tones*): Oh, my mother! my poor dear mother! bleeding and dying I left you, perhaps never to see you again! These cruel marauders with their insatiable avarice, before my own eyes they stabbed you, and pillaged and destroyed our home, nor even let me staunch your wounds. I see you still before me, mangled and bleeding, and so must I see you all the rest of my days. And I, the son of the first in the land, exiled from my home, a wanderer, given the grace of being a servant in the house of those who destroyed my own. And yet I have merited this punishment duly. Having immense wealth, you lavished it all on me, your only son, and gave me all my heart desired. I was spoiled; and, accustomed to have my way in everything, demanded it always. In open rebellion I came out against your authority and heeded not the advice set down for me in this book for my own good. And when our envious neighbors saw that there was strife within our house, then they knew that their opportunity to strike was at hand. But when I saw the outward danger I forgot all petty troubles, and long I fought and desperately to defend you, oh my mother! But to no avail. My sin is great, but my punishment greater! (*Rising*) One comfort alone I have left: this little book, this relic, which I will keep always with me, come weal, come woe, that I may look through its pages as you wished me to. All its rules will I obey, though in a strange house, and my duty henceforth shall be to guard it and keep it, until chance may permit me to go back to the spot where I was born, to rebuild the house destroyed, and to replace in it



## THE ADOPTED SON

this sacred relic of blood, and tears. . . . (*Exit left, weeping.*)

PAGAN (*Enter centre; bracelets on arms, gold band around waist, head-dress on hair*): Oh, what wonderful ornaments! (*Surveying herself.*) And how they become me! Indeed it were a wicked waste to put such beautiful gems on a less beautiful person, who could not do justice to their worth. Now on me, they not only enhance my beauty, but are enhanced in return by me, for lovely gems must have a lovely setting. But there is no one here admiring me! Where is that youth Judah? I like him better than most of the servants recently brought here. He looked refined and intelligent in spite of his tattered appearance. I think we shall spend many pleasant hours together, though I intend to keep him in his proper place. (*Calls*) Judah!

JUDAH (*Enter left; has not changed to Roman dress, but still wears long robe and fringes. Clothes dusted, hair combed, looks cleaner and fresher*): What is your wish?

PAGAN: Do you not think me beautiful, Judah, with all these wonderful jewels?

JUDAH (*Aside*): My mother's jewels! Oh, I must be calm!

PAGAN: Why do you not answer me?

JUDAH: Tell me, Pagan, do you never think of anything but outward beauty?

PAGAN: And what is there more worthy of thought than beauty and power?

JUDAH: Mere material beauty fades in time, but the beauty of a noble act lives forever.

PAGAN (*Laughs*): How absurdly you talk Judah! What compensation is there in being solicitous for the welfare of others? None whatever! While on the other hand, if we crave for power, and bring our neighbors to submit to our superior wisdom, we both gain their wealth and rule su-

## THE ADOPTED SON

preme. Come, look out through this door. All the houses that you see, both to right and to left belong to my mother. The inmates are all our servants and their labor is used to build our courts, gardens and fountains. I live sumptuously in a house of affluence, and enjoy life to its fullest extent as it was meant to be enjoyed. Those who do not acquire are failures, and it is due only to their inability to gain, and not to any lack of desire on their part. But as to the development of the mind, we are not as ignorant as you suppose. We also have many books, and great students among our servants. We teach of the wonders of nature; the sun, moon and stars; the trees, mountains and rivers; and all the creatures of earth and air. Now, what does your book teach you that is superior, and what have you benefitted by its teaching?

JUDAH: My book simply teaches a different version of life. It tells us that we were created to contribute, not to receive. Life is short and that which is received is enjoyed only a short time, and then left after us, while we depart as poor as when first we came. But that which we give remains after us. Moreover, we have no choice in the matter. We were created for the purpose of giving and could not do otherwise even should we wish. The sun, moon and stars were created to give light; the tree to give fruit; and the flower to give fragrance and beauty. (*Enter centre Roma, unseen by Judah and Pagan. Stands listening.*) And do you think that if the same flower be planted in meaner and poorer surroundings its fragrance and beauty is less? Because of its meaner surroundings its beauty seems tenfold by comparison; because of the lack of fragrance of other flowers, its fragrance is felt the stronger; and tenfold is it appreciated by those who have no other flowers to delight in, than if it were in a large lovely garden, where it would be lost among the others.



## THE ADOPTED SON

Therefore, when a flower is transplanted from richer soil to poorer, though it may droop itself somewhat, it yet fulfils its mission better than before. And so it is with mankind also.

ROMA: Well! and what is this? How long since has the daughter of Roma become accustomed to carry on familiar intercourse with the servants of her house? Have you lost your dignity, Pagan? Can you compare his state to yours? You, Judah, I wish to warn against one thing only. That is, to know your place and keep it. Do you think that you are still in your home and speaking in the position of master? Now pay heed to what I say. I have been more lenient with you than with other servants brought to my house, because you have found favor in my eyes. I have granted you permission to retain your book. I notice also that you have not changed your garments for the newer and finer dress of my house as I required you to do. But I shall permit you to wear your own if you prefer it on account of its association in your memory with other days. These privileges do I grant you, your individuality among my other servants. And should you prove faithful to my house, I shall even appoint you to a place of trust. But you must always remember that you fill the position of servant, and must not deign to look at my daughter in the light of an equal or try to seduce her love.

JUDAH: But I did not —

ROMA: Silence! Roma is speaking! A high and exalted place does my daughter occupy, and much higher shall she rise. She is young yet, but my aspirations for her are very great and I shall guard her from all familiarity with servants. This, however, you must understand clearly: that lenient as I am to those to whom I wish to show favor, so cruel can I be in comparison to those who offend me. Therefore, I warn you, and Roma warns not twice! Now go!

## THE ADOPTED SON

*(Exit Judah left, in excitement leaving his book on table.)*

ROMA: And now, Pagan, come with me and I shall see that you are out of the way of temptation. *(Exeunt centre Roma with Pagan by hand.)*

*(Thirty seconds perfect quiet.)*

*(Enter Christian right as follows: door opens slowly, puts head in, peers cautiously around on all sides. Seeing no one present steals in and stands looking around.)*

CHRISTIAN: At last I have been able to steal in unobserved. *(Is tired and looks worn, just like Judah.)* I am weary and foot-sore, but I shall now rest. As long as I have found shelter, I am content. But I must keep concealed or I may be driven out. *(Sees Judah's book on table.)* Why, what is this? Judah's book! Then he also lives here. He knows me and will perhaps help me. It is a very interesting book, but can be greatly improved. I shall show Judah several alterations and amendments which I have devised and which fully completes it.

JUDAH *(Enter left)*: I forgot my book in my excitement. I hope it is still here. *(Sees Christian holding same, snatches it away.)* This is my book.

CHRISTIAN: Judah! Do you not know me? I am Christian.

JUDAH: Christian? Oh, yes, in my own house you were born. How come you here, and what do you seek?

CHRISTIAN: What do I seek but shelter and rest, even as you yourself? I stole in here when the guards at the door grew negligent. When your house was destroyed, I also lost a shelter and have come seeking another. You will not betray me, Judah? You will not have them drive me out?

JUDAH: I have no intention of betraying you, Christian. But I have asked you several times not to deface my book with your alterations. You have entirely misinterpreted the meaning. I have never denied you the read-

## THE ADOPTED SON

ing of my book, but I shall not permit its defacement. I have no wish to interfere with you in any way, but I shall brook no interference from you either. (*Judah exit left.*)

CHRISTIAN: He walks away from me, and I had hoped that he would befriend me. I am alone in this great house. But I shall form new friendships. I shall hide among the servants for awhile until I find out whether I am welcome or not. (*Starts toward door centre, is met by Pagan coming in. Christian starts, frightened.*)

PAGAN: Who are you? Are you a new servant?

CHRISTIAN: I am your servant, and at your command. Christian is my name.

PAGAN: Go, then, and don the garb of our house, for your own is torn and dusty.

CHRISTIAN (*Aside*): Ah, that is good. In the dress of a servant of the house I shall pass unnoticed. (*Exit Christian left.*)

PAGAN: I have stolen away from mother, and come to see Judah again, but he is not here. I wish to continue the conversation interrupted by mother; for he impressed me strongly. I must not let mother find us together again, however, for she was terribly vexed. There seems to be much reason to his theory. If nature ordained that all things should contribute to the world, then it would indeed be futile to attempt to oppose nature. In regard to the sun, moon and stars, the trees and flowers, I can readily see the truth of his argument. But as concerns mankind, I do not feel convinced. All things were created for the use of mankind, even according to his own book. It would therefore seem that man must receive. But again, the thought that we live but to give, puts me in doubt once more. I should like to speak with him once more; he would perhaps explain more clearly. However, I should be loth to think that power and beauty should be renounced. For

## THE ADOPTED SON

what reason, then, does beauty exist, if not to be enjoyed? And I have inherent love for it. (*Surveying herself admiringly.*)

(*Enter left Christian, in Roman attire, carrying Judah's book.*)

PAGAN: Ah, Christian, I see you have changed to our dress. It is more becoming than the long robe you wore. Tell me Christian, do you not think power and beauty are essential to happiness?

CHRISTIAN: Power—to do good, and beauty of soul, are indeed important to happiness; but mere physical power and beauty are but empty show.

PAGAN: How similar your statement is to Judah's. Have you been conversing with him also? Oh, that is his book you are carrying, is it not?

CHRISTIAN: I have only borrowed it for a while.

PAGAN: Are you related then?

CHRISTIAN: I was born in Judah's house, and we have known each other long. But we are drifting apart because of this very book. He will not listen to my suggestions of improvement and alterations. I am therefore going to write one more fitting the times. Judah is far behind time.

JUDAH (*Enter left*): So you have stolen my book again, Christian. Did I not tell you that I would not have it spoiled by your bungling? You misconstrue the meaning and misinterpret it to others. Now give it back to me. (*Judah takes book away, and exits left.*)

PAGAN: Why is he so angry with you?

CHRISTIAN: He is very stubborn and foolish. He lives always in the past, and looks not toward the future. I would improve his book by altering it so that it could be applicable to any house and time. I would grant more liberty, and live more socially with all I meet. Judah reads it differently. He is conservative. He wears his own

## THE ADOPTED SON

garment, though old and worn, in preference to the newer garments of other houses. He will eat at no man's table, though he allows all to eat at his. He is very proud and haughty while I maintain that we should be humble and recognize everyone as a master whom we are willing to serve. That is why we are becoming estranged.

PAGAN: He is in high favor with my mother. But what you say is quite true. He is very conservative. You are more cheerful, Christian; your doctrine is easier to accept.

ROMA (*Enter centre*): Well, my daughter, and who is this new arrival?

PAGAN: Why, mother, this is Christian, the new servant.

ROMA: And how came you into my house: I knew not of your arrival nor did you come in with my permission. Like a thief you have stolen in, and like a thief you try to steal my Pagan's affection. A homeless and nameless youth, a menial, do you dare even to address the daughter of this house? Begone from my sight, lest I forget compassion and have you driven out like a dog!

CHRISTIAN (*Aside in passing Pagan*): I will see you again, fair Pagan. (*Christian exits right.*)

ROMA: Now, daughter, hearken to me. All the world is only a fight for supremacy. The wise gain it and know how to hold it, once it is theirs. All these servants are envious of your good fortune, and would feign drag you down to their own mean level. Then they would abuse you and laugh at your discomfiture. All their stories, all their persuasion tend only to this one purpose. My every effort and ambition are but for your sake. You must look to someone higher than a servant for a fit companion through life. Nor do I mean to be thwarted in my purpose by you, yourself. Much as I love you, I shall use discipline and punish you severely if I find you again intimately conversing with servants. Come, let us complete the inspec-



## THE ADOPTED SON

tion of the booty, and forget whatever unpleasantness has passed. (*Exeunt Roma and Pagan centre.*)

CHRISTIAN (*Enter right*): What a narrow escape that was. What if she had driven me out? But I shall speak again to Pagan, despite Roma's warning. She must be taught the true values of life, for her mother's conceptions of value are very erroneous. I shall exterminate all false pride and arrogance in her. She is young, and her mind yet impressionable. And this house must I make my home. I do not think that my task will be difficult, for Pagan already shows me favor. I wonder if she will return as I bade her. Ah, here she comes. — (*Christian steps toward right and hides.*)

PAGAN (*Enter centre*): I do not mean to forego anything I desire, and mother's warnings do not frighten me. Opposition tends only to make me rebellious. But I know not how to choose between the three different ways that I am taught. I love power and beauty, but I love companionship more. Judah is of high intelligence, but he does not seek me. Whatever I ask him he explains to me, but I must seek him out. He keeps aloof and even seems to hold himself superior. Christian is more like my own. He wears our dress, eats our food, and above all sees life in a rosier hue. Though also preaching Judah's book, he modifies its severity and offers attractions.

CHRISTIAN: Pagan, do you also forbid me to talk to you? For if you do, I shall bow to your wish and withdraw, but if my presence is welcome to you, I shall brave all else, fearless of your mother's threats.

PAGAN: And I, Christian, like to be sought out, and admire the brave.

ROMA (*Entering centre with two servants carrying chest*): So, you defy Roma? And you, Pagan, think

## THE ADOPTED SON

that I will spare you? Well, we shall see. (*To servants*) Take him! (*Servants take hold of Christian.*)

ROMA: Whip him! (*Servants whip Christian many times, Christian cries out and struggles, growing weaker and weaker and falling to knees. Pagan screams attempting to free herself from her mother's grasp and to go to Christian. At last frees herself as Christian falls unconscious, and throws herself in front of him in time to get several blows on her own body. Faints also.*)

ROMA (*To servants*): Enough! Come, we shall leave them to awake to better sense. (*Exeunt centre Roma and servants.*)  
(*Several seconds perfect quiet.*)

(*Pagan moves, groans, rises, stares blankly round a moment. Perceives Christian.*)

PAGAN: Oh Christian! (*Tears gown, and binds Christian's head, holding it on her shoulder. Christian slowly recovers under her care. Groans.*)

CHRISTIAN: Ah Pagan, and have you not deserted me?

PAGAN: I have suffered with you, Christian.

CHRISTIAN (*Rising*): Then I can bear all.

PAGAN: Christian, you must not leave me now. If you go away, though it be ever so far, I shall go with you.

CHRISTIAN: You mean that you would leave your mother for me?

PAGAN: I shall not leave you.

CHRISTIAN: Ah Pagan, then will you dare her further, and wed me against her will?

PAGAN: Since I cannot gain her approval, I will wed you without it.

CHRISTIAN: Come, then, let us steal away before they return and again tear you from me. (*Exeunt centre Christian and Pagan.*)

ROMA (*Enter centre with servants*): Now we shall see if they are still defiant, and if they think that Roma's warn-

## THE ADOPTED SON

ings are but a jest. (*Looking round.*) But where are they? (*alarmed*) Oh where is my child? He has stolen her as revenge. (*to servants*) Go, quickly, and overtake them, and do not return without them. (*Servants exeunt.*) Oh my daughter, why did I leave you? Come back to me and I will forgive you everything. Oh Pagan, Pagan, where are you? (*Walks excitedly wringing hands.*)

(*Enter right, servants bringing Christian and Pagan.*)

ROMA: Oh my child, they have brought you back to me. See how he has maltreated you, and torn your beautiful garments.

PAGAN: My name is no longer Pagan, mother, I have just wedded Christian and taken his name. Do not look so grieved, my mother, for I am indeed happy, as I love him truly. We ask your forgiveness and blessing. Will you not grant it, oh my mother?

ROMA: Address me not as mother, you are no longer my child. But I will separate you nevertheless. (*To servants*) Take them apart. (*Servants drag them apart. Roma walks excitedly up and down room, looking from one to another.*)

CHRISTIAN: And of what avail is it to separate us now? Can you undo that which is done? Will keeping us apart change her? She is already Christian, and the happier for it. And what do you desire more than her happiness? You merely thought to gain it through other means. But if the result attained is that which you desire, what matters the means? Why not rejoice with her?

PAGAN: Indeed, my mother, can you not realize that instead of losing a daughter you have won a son, if you will but take him into your heart? He will help to make your house more powerful, for now he will be working for the glory of his home and mother. Will you not forgive us mother, and embrace Christian as your own son?



## THE ADOPTED SON

ROMA (*Relenting slowly*): But see how he has torn your beautiful garment.

PAGAN: With my own hands did I tear this dress. Of what comparison is this outward beauty to the inward happiness I now feel? Do you not understand? (*Stretching forth her hands.*)

ROMA: Oh, my child. (*Embraces her.*)

PAGAN: And will you not embrace Christian for my sake also?

ROMA: And is he not now my son? Come then to my heart. (*Embraces Christian.*)

CHRISTIAN: And I vow that you will never regret having taken me into your heart. From this day forth all my exertions shall be but to make your house the most powerful of all. Its former power shall be as nought compared to the greatness it will yet acquire. My house will I make it henceforth, and all shall surely recognize the power of Roma as the mother of Christian.

ROMA: Then I will surely rejoice in you as a son. But come, daughter, and change your dress for one more presentable. I shall not detain her long, Christian; we will return shortly. (*Exeunt Roma and Pagan.*)

CHRISTIAN: At last my efforts have been crowned with success! But it has not yet attained its highest pinnacle. Pagan is mine, and Roma my mother; master of the house have I become, but I have much more to accomplish. I will establish a full set of rules for my Pagan whereby she may be taught the true values of life, and worthy ideals. A great responsibility has devolved upon my shoulders; for not only must I manage this house by an entirely different method, but I must prove by the outcome of that management to all the other houses in the neighborhood, that my method is the most worthy. Therefore, I must to work. (*Sits down, writes for awhile, stops to think.*) I need

## THE ADOPTED SON

Judah's book now, for although my ideas are newer, still they spring from the reading of the Book. (*Goes to door, calls*) Judah!

JUDAH (*Enter left*): What do you wish?

CHRISTIAN: Have you heard of the change in this house, Judah, and of my present position here?

JUDAH: Yes, Christian, what has that to do with me?

CHRISTIAN: Is it not proof of the superiority of my teaching over yours, that I have in so short a time won Pagan, convinced Roma, and become master of the house, while you, who was here long before me, still fill the position of servant?

JUDAH: Had you convinced those that had as much knowledge or more than yourself, Christian, you might feel that you had accomplished something. But they knew little of real value. Is it then so commendable a thing to have won those by your argument, who had no better to offer?

CHRISTIAN: But what about your own argument? Why were you then unable to convince them?

JUDAH: I did not seek to do so. I merely imparted knowledge when it was sought of me, for only by seeking can the truth be found. You, Christian, have exerted yourself in every way; you have been the seeker, rather than the sought. And by what method did you win them if not by the arguments of my own book?

CHRISTIAN: No, Judah, the ideas are my own. I first received knowledge from the Book, but knowledge without ideas to further it is of no use whatever. That is what I wish to discuss with you. I do not try to deny the quality of the knowledge of the Book, but what I wish to point out to you is, that you lack ideas by means of which you may put your knowledge into practice. Now, I have thought of a plan whereby we might work in conjunction, by putting

## THE ADOPTED SON

together your knowledge and my ideas, and teach to our ignorant neighbors that which will bring them out of the depths of darkness. Will not that be a wonderful work?

JUDAH: Not with your ideas, Christian. You may think that your ideas are an improvement, but to my mind the teaching of the knowledge in your manner would be detrimental rather than beneficial. Can the son teach the father of experience in life? This book was expounded long before you were born. I have had it for many years, but have not read it through yet. You have had but a slight insight into it and would already improve it. Before we can criticise anything, we must first be familiar with that which we wish to criticise. Many have wished to improve the Book, Christian, but they have always been those who did not know much about it. Another youth whom I have met in my travels has attempted to reconstruct the writing of the Book. You have also met with him. His name is Mohammed. I need not tell you how far he has deviated from the true meaning of the lessons implied. You have yourself pronounced his work a failure, and he has done the same of yours. Yet you both realize the worth of the Book in the original. Therefore you can see that to me your plan is impossible.

CHRISTIAN: I can see very clearly, Judah, that you wish only to balk me in this wonderful work. But it shall not be! I would provide for the good of all, but your envy will not permit you to forget old grievances. You are still vexed and jealous that I have won Pagan, whom you had yourself hoped to win. I wished to make you my friend even though I had risen far above you. But remember that Pagan is mine, and I shall teach her as I see fit. And if I find you interfering in any way, you shall be made to realize that I am master in this house.

## THE ADOPTED SON

JUDAH: Your preaching is inconsistent with your practice, Christian. You preach meekness and humbleness and practise despotism and threats.

CHRISTIAN: I will practise only discipline in my house. You may go! (*Exit Judah left.*)

CHRISTIAN (*Walking to and fro*): He ignored me when he was in favor and I unfortunate, and he ignores me still when I am master and he a mere slave. I have condescended in many ways, and if he chooses to show a spirit of antagonism, he will force me to use discipline in order that I may attain my ideal for the good of the entire community.

ROMA (*Enter centre*): What is it that disturbs you so, my son?

CHRISTIAN: It is Judah. He cannot bear to see me in favor and abuses me shamefully. Why do you allow him to wear his own garment which is an ugly spot in our house?

ROMA: If it displease you, I will order him to change it.

CHRISTIAN: And if he refuse?

ROMA: Fear not, he will do as I demand.

CHRISTIAN: Very well then, I leave him to you. (*Exit.*)

ROMA: He is right. Judah is entirely too stubborn. But I have found him useful in the house, and do not wish to lose his advice and work. I must therefore treat this matter diplomatically. (*Calls*) Judah!

JUDAH (*Enter left*): Yes, Madam?

ROMA: You have been a faithful servant, Judah, and I wish to reward you by raising you to the position of overseer of my household and servants.

JUDAH: Yes?

ROMA: You will therefore, of course, change your dress to one more fitting, and lay aside your book for the worthier studies you will of necessity have to undertake in your new capacity.

## THE ADOPTED SON

JUDAH: You honor me highly, madam, but I prefer my lowly position with my own manner of living.

ROMA: I do not think you understand. When Roma bestows a favor, she asks not your choice in the matter.

JUDAH: Nevertheless, I decline the honor!

ROMA: You know not to whom you speak, it seems. You will do as I direct you. Those fringes and that robe you will remove. Your book you will lay aside, for I will tolerate no more wasting of time in that manner. Moreover, you will recognize Christian as your master, and will bow to him in all due fashion.

JUDAH: I will not recognize Christian as my master, nor bow to him.

ROMA: Now Judah, listen to me. You know that I can make you to bow to my will in this matter. But I would rather you do this of your own free will, and thereby receive the reward I have offered you. But if you attempt to oppose me you will but bring disgrace and punishment upon yourself. Now choose, for I will waste no more words.

JUDAH: I have already chosen!

ROMA: Very well, then. It is decided. Come in everybody, and witness Roma's judgment. (*Enter Christian, Prejudice, Pagan, servants, etc.*)

ROMA: Behold how Roma punishes those who disobey her. Christian, what punishment shall we impose upon Judah for refusing to bow to you as master of this house? (*Prejudice steps up to Christian and whispers in his ear.*)

CHRISTIAN: Let him be bound securely, so that he can use neither hand nor foot, let his book be torn before his eyes, and he himself beaten until he pleads for mercy and promises obedience.

ROMA (*To servants*): Obey your master. (*Servants take hold of Judah.*)



## THE ADOPTED SON

JUDAH: Oh Christian, you are following the dictates of Prejudice there beside you. It is a new acquaintance you have formed, but you know not who he is. He is the son of Ignorance and the twin brother of Superstition, whom everyone tries to drive out of their homes, because they corrupt their children, and gloat over their infamy. He is a false friend also, and though with you against the weak, will be against you with the strong, and do you as much harm as he now tempts you to do to me.

CHRISTIAN: I know not what you are talking about. *(To servants)* Do as you are commanded. *(Servants forcing book from Judah, which he attempts desperately to retain.)*

PAGAN: But why must he be punished thus? He has done no actual harm. There are really some very interesting stories in his book and I do not see why it should be taken from him.

CHRISTIAN: Do you see? He has been influencing her in his favor! *(Takes hold of Pagan and drags her angrily away from Judah. Roma takes her from Christian.)* He has tried to entice her away from me. Now I shall punish him myself as he deserves. *(Snatches whip from servant, begins raining blows on Judah. Judah cries out.)*

CHRISTIAN: Well, why does your book not protect you? Do you ask for mercy?

JUDAH: What mercy can I expect at your hands?

CHRISTIAN: Do you recognize me as your master?

JUDAH: Have you then so soon forgotten the effect of punishment unmerited? Did the blows you received so short a time ago, tend to make you docile?

CHRISTIAN: Is that your answer? *(Judah nods assent.)*

ROMA: Beat him into submission. *(Prejudice shouts triumphantly.)*

## THE ADOPTED SON

*(Scene is one of total disorder. Pagan held in grip of Roma. Judah being beaten. Suddenly loud tumult is heard without. All stop. Roma runs to window.)*

ROMA: Good heavens! 'Tis the barbarian Goths from the next house. In our feeling of security and power we have become negligent in the guarding of our house from these vile trash. To the doors and windows, all of you, quick!

*(Servants release Judah who falls to floor exhausted. All rush to doors but are too late. Doors burst open, and many wildy-dressed men enter brandishing hatchets and clubs. — Struggles, yells, all the household of Roma bound. Prejudice turns against Christian and binds him. Laughs.)*

GOTH *(Picks up Judah)*: Who are you?

JUDAH: My name is Judah.

GOTH: We shall take you to our mistress' house with us.

JUDAH *(Picks up book which has fallen to floor)*: I know not if I shall fare better, I cannot fare worse.

*(Curtain falls.)*

ACT II

SPAIN

(*Curtain rises.*)

(*Mother Espania sitting in arm-chair industriously knitting. Son, Don Espania, standing at window, right, dressed as Spanish gentleman with lace, etc.; sword at side.*)

DON: Mother, do come over here, and look at what is going on in the next house. There is such a commotion over that youth Judah, whom they brought to their house, when they returned triumphant from the house of Roma. I have long been watching from this window all that takes place there. When first they returned, they welcomed him as a guest and gave him a place of honor in the house. But they soon tired of him, and are repealing all favors.

ESPANIA: And have you nothing better to do, Don, than to stand at the window, watching your neighbors?

DON (*Walks over; and, sitting on arm of mother's chair, caresses her shoulders.*): Now, mother, you must not chide me. I am not as idle as I appear. You know, I have the welfare of the house as much at heart as you have. But you surely do not expect me, your own son, to do the common labor myself? That is why I have been watching through the window.

ESPANIA: I cannot see how that will improve matters any.

DON: Well then, consider. This Judah is a waif and homeless. He has lived in the houses of Roma, Gaul, and Angel, and in each he has learnt their customs.



## THE ADOPTED SON

ESPANIA: But Don, what has all this to do with the welfare of our house?

DON: Why, everything, mother. He has no bond to tie him to the house he is now in, and if he finds the treatment he receives there unbearable, he will soon look for better quarters. If you should offer him a home, and an asylum from his troubles, would he not turn that knowledge to our advantage?

ESPANIA: You are right, my son. If he is being abused, it would be an act of mercy to offer him a home, and I believe with you, that a man of such a thrifty nature would well repay us for our hospitality. Go then, and extend to him an invitation to come here on a visit, and then we shall apprise him of our plan.

DON (*At window*): Oh, mother, look! He is being driven out, nor do they allow him to take his possessions. See, he is walking in this direction. Shall I open the door and call to him, that he may not wander to some other house?

ESPANIA: Yes, yes, my son, do so by all means. We shall befriend him in his need. (*Don Espania opens door wide and calls to Judah. Judah appears, holding book, stick and bundle over shoulder. Knocks timidly at open door.*)

ESPANIA: Yes, yes, my boy, come in and welcome. (*As he stumbles*) Oh, you are ill! Sit down and I shall give you something to drink to relieve you.

JUDAH (*Brokenly*): You overwhelm me with your kindness. This humane treatment is so unexpected, I know not how to express my gratitude. Words fail me.

ESPANIA: Grieve not, my boy, I have long watched the atrocities practised upon you by our neighbors and have sympathized with you. I wish to help you out of your

## THE ADOPTED SON

dilemma and offer you a home and the protection of a mother, if you but care to remain here.

JUDAH (*Rising from chair into which he has fallen exhausted*): You mean that not only do you offer me a refuge, but receive me as a member of your family instead of the stranger that I am? And that blessed word, mother, the sweetest word in all the world, which I have not uttered for so long a time — (*Voice breaks, falls on knees before Espania, and kisses robe.*)

DON (*Extending hand*): And I wish to call you brother.

ESPANIA (*Raising him*): Come, come, and why should I not feel for you? Am I not myself a mother, and would I not wish someone to treat my son likewise should he lose my love and protection?

JUDAH: But I have had vastly different treatment. I have just been driven out of Gaul's house. Angel, likewise, closed her doors against me and I knew not where to turn. I vow to you Senora Espania, by the love I bear my own lost mother, that I shall prove worthy of this great gift, and bestow upon you the same devotion, as though I were truly your son.

ESPANIA: You are indeed my son now Judah, for I adopt you as such. But tell us, why did Gaul drive you out? (*Draws forward chair, sits at right of Judah, Don sits at left.*)

JUDAH: There is little to relate. When the Goths took me from Roma's house I cared not what they did with me. I had suffered much and almost anything was preferable to what I was undergoing. It was therefore an unanticipated surprise to find that I was treated with kindness in this new house, and received as a guest instead of a servant. They were very rough people and honored me because of my knowledge of fine manners from Roma's house and also from my own, which was once great. The mistress of

## THE ADOPTED SON

the house heaped favors upon me; but I should have anticipated the ultimate result, for she had a son of her own and it was natural that he should resent the situation. At first he created incredible stories of my unfaithfulness, but for a long time she paid no heed to them. So persistent was he, however, that she finally changed her honors to abuse. I was forbidden to wear costly garments, for it vexed her child; I was ordered to wear a badge of disgrace that all in the house who saw me might know that I was Judah the unfavored. I endured all, for where had I to go? Enraged at my perseverance, they had recourse to barbarism. Not a crime was committed but it was laid at my door; not a theft, but it was mine; nor did my submitting to a search which proved nothing in my possession exonerate me. I was beaten and punished without cause, and finally my earnings were taken from me and I was driven out without pretense of reason.

ESPANIA: What wicked hearts those people must have!

JUDAH: Yet we should not be angry with those that hate and wrong us, but rather pity them, for hatred is simply the child of a diseased brain.

DON: And have you then never felt hatred for those who abused you so shamefully?

JUDAH: Am I not human? Many times indeed, when my burden was heaviest, did I feel hatred and anger against my adversaries, and even plotted revenge. For human nature is so constituted that when we suffer greatly we do not stop to think and reason. But when the cooler moments of judgment come, then do we realize the wrong and futility of such emotions. Whenever I felt most despondent I turned for solace to this little book, which I have always with me, and in it I found comfort and hope. Then did my animosity turn rather to pity and I thought only of

## THE ADOPTED SON

showing those who had wronged me their erroneous ways and teaching them worthier ones.

ESPANIA (*Rising*): We shall attempt to eradicate the memory of these sufferings from your mind. Our house is not as wealthy or splendid as that of Roma, but we offer you our friendship and bid you regard our home as your own.

JUDAH: You could offer me no greater wealth. And this house offers me greater pleasure than even the house of Roma. I have often looked longingly at your beautiful gardens and vineyards which remind me of those that were at my own house and are dear to me on that account. To work in them would afford me great delight and I shall help cultivate them if you will allow me, for I am familiar with the work.

ESPANIA: Indeed you may choose your manner of living. The house and surroundings are all open to you. You may go where you please, and do whatever work you like. I shall stand ready at all times to advise you, even as the mother I have promised to be to you. Don will now take you through the house that you may be acquainted with its every part, and you may yourself choose the part you wish to stay in, and place your belongings there.

JUDAH: Words are too empty to express what I long to say. I shall thank you rather in deeds for your great kindness.

DON: Come then, brother. (*Exeunt left Don and Judah.*)

ESPANIA: Poor boy, he has suffered much. I shall try to make him forget the past.

CHRISTIAN (*Enter centre*): Well, Senora, and what makes your face so radiant?

ESPANIA: Oh Christian, you came in so quietly, I did not hear you enter.

## THE ADOPTED SON

CHRISTIAN: You know, I seldom announce my arrival. But why are you so strangely elated?

ESPANIA: Did you not yourself teach me that when we do a good turn to a fellow-creature we are the happier for it? I have just adopted a homeless boy, and I find your teaching true.

CHRISTIAN: Who is this boy?

ESPANIA: You know him well. He is Judah. He was so forlorn, I could not help but pity him. I know that there have been altercations between you, but I do not think his residing here need interfere with your visits. But sit down. (*Christian and Espania seat themselves.*)

CHRISTIAN: It is an estimable deed you have done, Espania. We should always show compassion to those who stand in need of our aid. 'Tis true we have had altercations, but I meant only to correct him. If it seems I dealt harshly with him, it is Prejudice's fault. He tried to influence me, but I am endeavoring now to banish him from my house, for I have found him false and dangerous. When the barbarians vanquished our house, Prejudice turned spy upon us, and many were the privations we underwent because of his falsity. But it is not an easy task to banish him, for his mother Ignorance has a strong hold upon the people, and as long as they harbor her it is impossible to make them renounce Prejudice and Superstition. I know not which of the two does more harm, but I shall yet find a way of conquering them.

ESPANIA: I am certain you will succeed. But tell me, how is your mother Roma?

CHRISTIAN: Sad to relate, Senora, she has lost all her former greatness and only in name does she yet survive. In me, however, shall she live again, and I shall yet proclaim her mistress of the world!



## THE ADOPTED SON

ESPANIA: Tell me then, how have you survived all, and even brought your tormentors to become your slaves?

CHRISTIAN: I have not fought them physically, but morally, and being the stronger, I have won. But I must on my journey (*rising.*) I have several other visits to make among our neighbors, so I will take my leave. Tell Judah, I bear him no malice, but hope he will yet come to see the right, since only in following my rules can he be truly happy.

ESPANIA: I will see you out. (*Exeunt centre Espania and Christian.*)

JUDAH (*Enter left*): I could not rest. I must express my gratitude in some definite manner. These few belongings, which I managed to save from confiscation, are but a small contribution, but they are all that I have. (*Takes out vases from bundle, places them on mantles and in centre of table; puts fur rug on chair of Espania. Sighs.*) Oh, how happy I would be if I could contribute ten times more!

ESPANIA (*Enter centre*): And are you not then happy in what you receive here, Judah?

JUDAH: Yes, indeed, I am very grateful for what advantages I enjoy. But it is only in the giving that we can be truly happy.

ESPANIA: By what line of reasoning, have you come to that conclusion?

JUDAH: I can but point to you as a mother. When does the mother feel the greatest joy? Is it not when she gives birth to her child, though she pass through the valley of death to do so, and gives to the world another human being? And in giving, we receive. For what can be compared to a mother's love or her happiness through it?

ESPANIA: But Judah, that is only a selfish desire to live through our children even after death.

## THE ADOPTED SON

JUDAH: Do you think so? Then what about the man of talent? The artist, the author, the sculptor and the musician. When is he the happiest? Is it not when he has given to the world some great masterpiece, which will remain even after he departs? The artist gives beauty to delight the eye; the sculptor, grace; the author, ideas to feed the mind; and the musician, harmony to delight the soul. And only in the giving are they happy! They care not for the wealth of this world in comparison. They sacrifice even many wants in order to attain that which is essential to further their aim, — that of contributing the best that is in them.

ESPANIA: And think you then that those who care only to receive and amass are not happy?

JUDAH: Human nature is so selfishly constituted that many do not realize the truth, and think that in amassing they are happy. But it is a mistaken idea whereby they feed their vanity at the expense of their happiness.

ESPANIA: And should we then always think only of giving as long as we live?

JUDAH: And when do we cease to live? Is it not when we have passed the age of usefulness and have no more to give? When the father has reared his children, and seen them off on their own voyage of life; when they can man their own boats without further assistance from him, then is he through with life. It is therefore only in giving, and in giving the best that is in us, that we can be truly happy.

ESPANIA: What great contribution then do you intend to make, since you have your ideas so well formed?

JUDAH (*Ecstatically*): I wish only to give the true knowledge of right and wrong. That one problem solved would solve all others. Humanity would not do wrong if it knew that it was detrimental to itself to do so. There is no intentional wrong, only a lack of knowledge of the

## THE ADOPTED SON

truth. And we are not competent to judge for ourselves. We instinctively feel in the right. It is only by seeking and learning, that the truth may be found.

ESPANIA: You talk much the same as Christian, Judah!

JUDAH (*Alarmed*): Christian? You are then familiar with him?

ESPANIA: He is an inmate here also, though his permanent home is in Roma's house. He speaks almost exactly as you do, and I do not understand why you do not agree better when your ideas are so much alike.

JUDAH: Our ways are different! He objects to mine, and cannot bear to have me in the same house with him.

ESPANIA: I think you bear him resentment unjustly. He has but recently told me that he bears you no ill-will and hopes you will yet find happiness in seeing the right.

JUDAH: You say I bear him resentment unjustly. Every house which has sheltered me since my wanderings have begun, I have been compelled to vacate upon his arrival! He has always tried to force me to his point of view.

ESPANIA: He will not interfere with your mode of living here. I believe, Judah, that your differences arise in your not understanding each other.

DON (*Enter*): Ah, you are here Judah:—I am ready to go into the garden with you, as you wish, to see what manner of improvement you can suggest.

JUDAH: Yes, Don, let us go out and see what we can accomplish.

ESPANIA: I will watch you through the window. (*Exeunt Don and Judah right.*)

ESPANIA (*At window*): How intimate they have become in such a short space of time! And what animation Don is showing! I have never seen him as enthusiastic before, or as thrifty. Not only is he planning with Judah, but is actually working, though he has often stated that it is



## THE ADOPTED SON

beneath his station to do manual labor. (*Happy laughter is heard from without from Don and Judah.*) It does one's heart good to hear them laugh so light-heartedly.

(*Enter left Ignorance, opens door centre. Enter centre Prejudice, dressed in robe of Christian.*)

ESPANIA (*Continuing to herself*): And I can see prosperity in the near future.

PREJUDICE: And think you it is due to Judah's presence?

ESPANIA (*Turning from window*): Who are you?

PREJUDICE: Why I am Christian. Have you so soon forgotten me?

ESPANIA: You wear the robe of Christian, but your manner is different.

PREJUDICE: Judah seems to have blinded your eyes to everything.

ESPANIA: What do you mean?

PREJUDICE: That you have become so enamoured that you can no longer see the intrigue practised under your very eyes.

ESPANIA: You seem to forget that you thought it commendable of me, when I told you I had adopted him as my son.

PREJUDICE (*Smiling*): Your adopted son, eh? Yes, you have adopted him, but has he reciprocated the affection? He has become your son, but has he accepted you as his mother? He wears the garment his own mother gave him, because he thinks only of her, and his love and devotion are all for her, though departed. He is working, obviously to make your house wealthy, but actually only that he may himself appropriate that wealth and extort from your house all that he possibly can.

ESPANIA: I do not believe Judah is planning anything so despicable, nor that he would in any way violate the hospitality he has received here.

## THE ADOPTED SON

PREJUDICE: So you think he is faithful? Have you tried to request anything of him? Would he, in order to please you, adopt your dress and your ways of living?

ESPANIA: I feel assured that he would comply with any request I might make.

PREJUDICE: Why do you not try?

ESPANIA: But what matters it to me if he likes his own manners better?

PREJUDICE: It would be a test of his faithfulness. But if your faith in him be absolute, you must take all consequences. I have but warned you, and you know from past experience that Christian advises you only for your own good. But I must be going, so good-bye. (*Espania turns to window again, meditatively.*)

PREJUDICE (*At centre door, aside*): Ha, ha, she is already thoughtful. Now Christian will be blamed for Prejudice's act. I have accomplished two things at once. If my mother Ignorance had not opened the door for me, this would not have been possible. Ha, ha, ha. (*Exit centre Prejudice.*)

ESPANIA: I do not think that Judah would disobey me; but, nevertheless, to ascertain the truth, there would be no harm in testing him. I shall not command him to change his costume, I shall but suggest it, and if he be sincere, and truly anxious to please me, he will act upon my suggestion. (*Enter right Don and Judah loaded with fruit.*)

JUDAH: Mother, we have brought the fruits of our labor to you.

DON: Judah gathers faster than I, he is more accustomed to it.

JUDAH: And we will till the land, and plough it, and after we have reaped the harvest we will sell the produce in the market and use to advantage all our resources.

## THE ADOPTED SON

ESPANIA: Judah, do you not find it a hindrance to your work to carry always your book with you?

DON: Yes, it is cumbersome. Why do you not lay it aside?

JUDAH: Oh no! I do my work the better for it. I carry it always, for reference and advice.

DON: I am weary with all this work, and am going out in the garden to drink from the cooling fountains. (*Exit right Don.*)

ESPANIA: You are slow to take on our manners, Judah. I wish to have you my son in every respect, but you isolate yourself. Though you work with Don, you join not in our festivals, and abstain from food at our table. Why do you cling so tenaciously to your manners of by-gone days? What sanctity is there about your garment that you will not change it for another?

JUDAH: Can you not understand that it is not the garment that is dear to me, but the memory that it represents? You can not blame me for holding sacred that which is an emblem of loved ones lost. I cling to it as the sole mark of distinction that I am Palestine's son, for it is the robe she gave me. Yet my love for her lessens not my respect and devotion to you, but rather increases it. (*Pause*) I shall take this fruit inside. (*Espania nods. Exit Judah left.*)

ESPANIA: I wonder if Christian is right. Not only does Judah not act upon my suggestion but he even remonstrates. What course had I best pursue now?

DON (*Entering suddenly at right, tugging at throat, eyes wild, and excited*): Oh mother, help me — I am poisoned — the water — fountain — I drank —

ESPANIA: Oh my son!

DON: I am choking — some one — help me —

## THE ADOPTED SON

*(Espania screams. Enter Judah left, servants all doors, among them Ignorance, Superstition, Fanaticism and Prejudice. Excitement reviving Don.)*

ESPANIA: Who has committed this unspeakable crime? Speak, any of you who knows aught about it!

SUPERSTITION: The fountain was bewitched.

ESPANIA: How do you know?

SUPERSTITION: I saw one spill a powder in it, and he had a book with him, and was canting mysterious words from it. 'Twas Judah there!

JUDAH: It is a lie! I did not throw anything into the fountain! You cannot believe Superstition!

FANATICISM: It is the truth! The fountain has been bewitched. He used sorcery.

IGNORANCE *(Croaking voice)*: Yes, yes. He did! he did!

ESPANIA: Yes, yes, I should have known he was but playing a part. Christian was right when he told me that his presence here would culminate in a crime against my house. But I could not believe that he was of such despicable character. . . . He meant to poison my son and remain sole possessor of our lands.

JUDAH: No, no! You will not believe anything so infamous of me. It is not only monstrous but incredible as well. You cannot believe me so odious!

ESPANIA: Do not dare to answer me! *(To Prejudice)* Advise me again, Christian. Tell me what punishment would be fit for so despicable a crime.

JUDAH: That is not Christian! that is Prejudice! Ah, now I see whence come all these false accusations. Prejudice, Superstition, Fanaticism and Ignorance. How can I battle against these?

ESPANIA: See how he raves! He thinks to blind us with mysterious language.

## THE ADOPTED SON

PREJUDICE: Calm yourself Espania. Do not allow him to excite you so. See, Don is already better.

ESPANIA: But I cannot be calm until I have meted out his punishment. I am too upset to think rationally. Suggest what I can do, Christian.

PREJUDICE: There is only one course to follow, Espania. You know Christian tempers all punishment with judgment and mercy, and therefore do I even plead for Judah, and though he be guilty, do I ask forgiveness for him.

ESPANIA: What!

PREJUDICE: But only upon one condition. You see, Judah is not really so bad at bottom, but that book full of sorcery and evil has corrupted him. It would be more laudable to correct his ways than to punish him. Offer him the alternative of adopting your ways with my better book, which will teach him worthier manners, or leaving your house ignominiously, never to return again.

ESPANIA: I would prefer to chastise him, but if you think this course best, I shall follow your advice, Christian.

JUDAH: Christian! Christian! Are you blind, entirely? It is a disgrace to the name of Christian!

ESPANIA: Silence! Your insolence is beyond belief. Here is Christian even pleading for you and you can only think of your vileness. You have heard his plan; it is very magnanimous. I shall give you a short space of time to consider it and choose your fate. Come, everyone, we shall leave him to himself to decide.

JUDAH (*As they leave, to Don*): Don, you know the truth. Have you not one word to say in my behalf? (*Don turns away. Exeunt all but Judah. Judah bows head in hands, sings Eli, Eli. Pause.*) What shall I do? Oh what shall I do? Why should I give up my mother's dress and the advice of the Book because Ignorance demands it of me? It is she, and only she, for without her there would not be the others.



## THE ADOPTED SON

But, then, the alternative. To leave this house forever. That would be far more preferable in spite of the deep-rooted love I have for it. But whither? On all sides do I turn, and on all sides are the doors closed to me. There are left only the barren fields and the water, death by starvation or drowning. Oh, but this house was such a haven! Why could it not last? The gardens, the palms, how I love them! And what if I remain? How can they force me to forget my mother? They will beat me, but what then! I have been beaten before. But, no! they will tear my book from me, they will destroy my dress. I will leave now before they return, and what if I do perish by the way? Persecution will end! (*Starts for door centre, is met by Hypocrisy who wears a smiling mask.*)

HYPOCRISY: But you are foolish! Why do either? (*Judah walks backwards as Hypocrisy walks further in.*)

JUDAH: What new foe have I to contend against?

HYPOCRISY: I am a friend, Judah, come to give you friendly counsel.

JUDAH (*Walking backwards*): No, no, you do not impress me with confidence!

HYPOCRISY: But I would show you a way out of your difficulties. My counsel is good if you will but listen!

JUDAH: I do not like your voice, it grates upon me!

HYPOCRISY: Mind not the voice, but the words spoken by the voice. I wish to help you out of your dilemma.

JUDAH: There is no way out.

HYPOCRISY: Why should you leave this house? You enjoy wealth and comfort here and all the advantages of a home.

JUDAH: But —

HYPOCRISY: But, you wish to explain, that you will not change your manners for theirs. There is no need. Heed but my advice and I will show you how to follow your own pursuits while obviously you are following their

## THE ADOPTED SON

directions. Read your own book while they believe you are reading theirs; pretend, in short, to comply with all their requests, while you follow your own inclinations and laugh at them for being your dupes.

JUDAH: Oh, I know you now, you are Hypocrisy; and under your smiling mask you are ugly as your voice is harsh.

HYPOCRISY: Yes, I am! What then? I am advising you but for your own good. You have already listened to me—

JUDAH: But I shall listen no more. Rather than do as you suggest I will give up all, the home, the protection I have had, and will again seek my fortune elsewhere. I go—  
(*Walks toward door.*)

HYPOCRISY (*Stepping in front of him*): Fool! and where will you go? Back to the house of Roma? You know from past experience what to expect there! France has already driven you out, Angel likewise. Those are three directions; in the fourth is the river. Will you cast yourself into it and perish, or will you attempt to cross it only to come to barren fields where you will die less mercifully from hunger, cold and exhaustion? You are going! But whither?

JUDAH: Yes, whither? Oh, I shall be driven to distraction! It is true, too true! But rather than practise the abominable deceit you suggest, I will perish!

HYPOCRISY: And your book with you! But now Christian has another, the loss will not be so keen.

JUDAH (*Turning back*): No! no! With this book would perish all that is good. For this book I have suffered, that it might some day render to humanity the greatest of all things, a knowledge of the truth. It must not perish, and to sustain it I must also exist, that I may forward its wisdom.



## THE ADOPTED SON

HYPOCRISY: You are right! And why should you think it abominable to continue in your own manner of living instead of theirs?

JUDAH: But to do so deceitfully! To pretend to coincide with their views! To live an everlasting lie!

HYPOCRISY: You do not do so from choice, but because they force you to. Therefore is the crime theirs, not yours. You are constant and true to your ideals and uphold them under all disadvantageous conditions. But they are deceitful to themselves even to think that because they force you to renounce your ways and take theirs, they force you also to believe their views. You are not the first to take my advice. Christian also has known me. When he posed as a servant in the house of Roma, he did so by my advice. He pretended to be true to her views, while secretly he was following his own. And thus did he avoid persecution. Long he deceived her and successfully, and he remained unperceived in the house until he became strong enough in friends and courage to defy her openly. And can you condemn him? Did he not rather act wisely and attain his end? See how she, herself, honored him afterwards. But would she have done so had she discovered him in the beginning? Had he been rebellious from the first, she would have entirely demolished him and his works and he would have come to nought!

JUDAH: And do you think I would be justified in practising deceit on those from whom I receive protection?

HYPOCRISY: You are justified in following any course that is for the enlightenment of mankind, rather than fail in the main aim of your existence. As they have forced you into this attitude, on them lies the blame, if any, not on you. Hark! they are returning for your decision! They

## THE ADOPTED SON

must not see me, for that would betray you. Look! smile as I do, and answer them pleasantly.

JUDAH: Oh, I cannot, it sickens me!

HYPOCRISY: You must!

JUDAH: But my face will belie my words.

HYPOCRISY: Here, put on this mask upon your face. It has a smiling expression and hides your own true one. (*Judah puts it on mechanically. Hypocrisy hides behind curtain at door.*)

(*Enter left Espania and others.*)

ESPANIA: Have you made your decision?

JUDAH: I have given the matter deep and careful consideration and have come to the conclusion that it is but for my own advantage to accept your plan. I have suffered deep remorse for having constructed barriers that separate me from the remainder of your household. I regret this sincerely and shall make atonement in following rigorously all rules meted out to me henceforth.

PREJUDICE: But you must not only give up your book, but also take mine and follow all the rules conscientiously. Are you prepared to do that?

JUDAH: I am ready to obey all commands.

PREJUDICE: At last you are talking sensibly. To show you the magnanimity of Christian, you shall have all your former privileges restored, and all charges against you withdrawn, in the hope that you follow the teaching you have yourself chosen, which will prevent you from any repetition of these crimes. Now let me have your book!

JUDAH: I will hand it to Don, to prove my sincerity. (*Hands book to Don.*)

ESPANIA: Very well! And now take Christian's, and see that you keep it. (*Judah takes book.*) And now, come, and we will initiate you into our manners and customs. (*Exeunt Judah and all, left, except Prejudice.*)

## THE ADOPTED SON

PREJUDICE: Come out Hypocrisy!

HYPOCRISY (*Enter centre*): Ha, ha, ha, am I not a good helpmate to you? I have given him my mask to wear and he will follow my advice. The mask will not remain always on, however, and when it drops off and they perceive the real Judah beneath it, their rage in having been deceived will cause them to punish him with the utmost severity. Have I not done well, Prejudice?

PREJUDICE: Hush! mention not that name so loud! Would you betray me?

HYPOCRISY: Ha, ha, to whom? To Ignorance, to Superstition, or Fanaticism?

PREJUDICE: You are right! They are all our friends. And we have done well. You have laid Judah open to peril, while I have placed a false crime at the feet of Christian. Later he will be blamed for all the suffering Judah is made to undergo. And it will create animosity between them both. That is our sole aim, for we must keep them apart; for if there is no cause of hatred between them and they come to understand each other, they will destroy Ignorance and all her offspring. Therefore we must keep them at odds no matter what the means. Hush! someone is coming! Go, now, I will do the rest. You must not be seen. (*Exit centre Hypocrisy.*)

ESPANIA (*Enter left*): Christian, do you think that Judah will be faithful now?

PREJUDICE: If he be sincere.

ESPANIA: You do not think he would dare deceive me?

PREJUDICE: I do not know. I think it advisable to take all precautions against possible deception.

ESPANIA: You are right. I shall run no further risks. I shall appoint an INQUISITOR, to watch him and see that he be not false to his vows, and stray not in the ways of evil. I think, Christian, that you are the best fitted for this

## THE ADOPTED SON

office, inasmuch as you know all the duties set in your book and will be able to detect any deviation therefrom.

PREJUDICE: I feel in duty bound to accept this commission, and I shall see that it is conscientiously executed. I shall inquire into all his actions and report any misdemeanor in order that he may be kept from wrong-doing. This is a pious commission indeed, for it means the saving of a sinner.

ESPANIA: And woe be unto him if I find that he has deceived me. No ordinary punishment will I administer. No torture shall be too great for so colossal a crime. As my own son did I adopt him and he accepted the protection of my house but turned traitor against me. If he fails me again I shall show him no mercy. I have ordered him to come here re-attired and with your book, and we will set him his lesson. Here he comes!

JUDAH (*Enter left, dressed in Spanish dress*): I am ready, Senora.

ESPANIA: Set him his lesson, Christian, and we will leave him at it. You, Judah, are at liberty to go in any part of the house as before, except the room which you sanctified to the reading of your book, and the memory of your mother. I wish you to lay aside your name Judah, and call yourself by the name of the teaching you have accepted. You shall have no more celebrations in commemoration of numerous anniversaries: such as the setting of candles for eight days when you saved your mother from being conquered by unfriendly neighbors; abstaining one day entirely from food to mourn the vanquishing of your house; spreading a feast for the day when you were presented with your book; and many other such observances. You will have plenty of duties to observe now in your new capacity, and these must be followed rigorously. You shall report to me at stated times so that I may see that you do

## THE ADOPTED SON

not grow lax in your duties. The closer you follow our rules, the happier you will be, for I shall reward all honesty, precisely as I shall punish all disloyalty. And now to your study! (*Exeunt Espania and Prejudice centre.*)

JUDAH (*Bends over book until he is certain they are out of hearing. Cautiously removes mask*): Oh, I am suffocating under this mask! It is unbearable, but Hypocrisy was right. These people are idiotic! Do they not know that the mind cannot be forced, that the only way to alter it is by persuasion of argument? And even persuasion by argument does not always prove the truer mind, but only the stronger, influencing the weaker. And should I give up my peace, yea, life itself, because fools demand it? I would be a greater fool than they, were I to do so. By using force, they but strengthen my own conviction, inasmuch as it proves that they cannot use persuasion because they have no argument strong enough to present. Outwardly I shall observe their manners, while truly I shall continue to believe as I feel convinced. Oh, if only I dared defy them, and do so openly! But it is impossible, and I shall have to follow Hypocrisy's advice, repugnant as it may be. (*Hears foot-steps*) Someone is coming. I must be wary. (*Replaces mask and bends over book.*)

(*Enter left Don, still holding Judah's book.*)

DON: I see you are studying diligently, Judah. (*Judah looks toward him.*) And you wear a smiling expression! You have changed considerably from the stubborn boy of a while ago. Tell me, Judah, what was it you dropped into the fountain from which I drank? Now you need not fear punishment.

JUDAH: You saw me near you, Don, and that I had nothing in my hands. Should I have drunk from the same water had I myself poisoned it?



## THE ADOPTED SON

DON: But Superstition says that you used sorcery and were yourself immune from the influence. How else do you account for my sudden illness?

JUDAH: Surely you will not believe Superstition? Is it not possible that a person be stricken with a malady? You are yourself now holding my book. Look into it, and see if there be anything mysterious in its writing.

DON (*Opening book*): There is much here that I do not understand.

JUDAH (*Eagerly*): But I could explain it to you, and you would find much wisdom in it. (*Don comes toward him.*)

JUDAH (*Looks cautiously round*): Ah, but I dare not. I have been forbidden to touch it.

DON: Can we not find a way?

JUDAH: In the cellar, where no one ever goes, we could hide and read the Book in secret.

DON: But tell me Judah, why are you so persistent in following your own methods in the face of all opposition?

JUDAH: My conviction is so strong that I can brave everything. I know my book holds the truth, and I am determined to have it expounded to the world. See, Don, you have read Christian's book, read mine also and judge for yourself.

DON: Your perseverance impresses me. But we must not risk my mother's anger. Come, then to the hiding-place and we will study in secret together.

JUDAH: I am coming! (*Exeunt Don and Judah left.*)

PREJUDICE (*Enter centre*): Very good! very good indeed! This is the precise moment I have been planning for. You have been wary, Judah, in removing your mask, but it will drop off soon. Meanwhile, to make my report. (*Writes*) Beneath the garb given him by Espania, he still wears the traditional fringes; the key to the forbidden room



## THE ADOPTED SON

he wears on his heart and in the stillness of the night he steals in there to do homage to the memory of his mother; he has enticed Don to secrecy with him and hides in the cellar, there to read his book. Senora Espania must be led there to find them. Don also will be implicated, but she will not punish him, for he is her own son, But it is entirely different with Judah. There are no ties to bind him to her heart. He is an alien, and will be treated accordingly.

ESPANIA (*Enter left*): Christian, I have just met Judah walking with Don. What does it signify? Do you think he is truly repentant and trying to make reparation for his wrongs, or do you believe he intends harm to Don? Have you been making careful inquiry into all his actions?

PREJUDICE: I have kept careful and constant watch and have had several suspicions confirmed. Nevertheless, I should not wish to accuse him without positive proof. I think the best plan at present would be to follow them and ascertain without any doubt where they are going and what they are doing. We will then know certainties and not rely on suppositions.

ESPANIA: You are right. Come then! (*Exeunt left Espania and Prejudice.*)

(*Enter centre Ignorance. Beckons to doors centre and right. Enter Fanaticism, Superstition and others.*)

IGNORANCE: Now there will be doings. Prejudice has gone to fetch him. We shall soon see our greatest enemy demolished. His only purpose in life is my destruction, but he does not realize how strong I am, and how many accomplices I have. Ha, ha, ha, he thought it would be an easy task to kill Ignorance. He shall see, he shall see — (*All whisper.*)

(*Enter Prejudice, dragging Judah, Espania holding Don by hand.*)

## THE ADOPTED SON

ESPANIA: Well, we have found you reading the book you were forbidden to touch, and Christian's report shows that you have disobeyed all other orders. What have you to say in vindication?

JUDAH: Nothing!

PREJUDICE (*Snatching mask from Judah's face and pulling out fringes from under robe*): And now you stand exposed in your true light!

JUDAH: And I rejoice that it so. I would rather stand thus, whatever the consequences, than to play for one more moment the miserable role I have been playing! I again breathe freely, for I stand with truth once more.

ESPANIA: You shall not breathe freely long, Judah. You are going to be tortured as you were never tortured before. I shall not have you killed outright, that would be too merciful. I cannot conceive of anything more despicable than the role you have been playing!

JUDAH: And have you played a more commendable one? Have you not been even more despicable in your infamous INQUISITION? Is it not an unheard of thing to have spies set on one, while harboring that one beneath your roof? If I have violated your hospitality, it was because you forced such severe measures upon me, but you have violated even the rules of humanity itself. I am prepared. Do with me what you will!

ESPANIA: You are not prepared for that which is going to happen to you, Judah. (*To servants*) Go into the next room, place the irons on the fire until they are red hot. (*One servant exits right.*) (*To second servant*) You, get a stout rope and make a gallows on the nearest tree. (*To third servant*) You, gather a pile of large stones, distribute them among all the servants, then dig a pit deep enough to hold him in an upright position up to his neck. (*To fourth*

## THE ADOPTED SON

*servant*) Tie together a pile of dry fagots and have oils ready to pour upon it. (*Exit each servant as ordered.*)

ESPANIA: Do you still stand with truth, Judah?

JUDAH (*Calmly*): Which of these deaths do you intend to give me?

ESPANIA: Which? Do you think you are going to have one, and have it over with? Surely you do not think that death is great enough punishment! You shall undergo each death, one after another. You shall not be allowed to die, but shall be sufficiently revived each time to enable you to undergo the next. How does that plan sound to you?

JUDAH: You will torture my body only, my soul will be free! In comparison to the torture of the soul I have been undergoing, it will be relief.

ESPANIA: And you will not cry out? You will not plead? Suppose I were to trust you once more, you would, I suppose, choose the freedom of the soul, rather than the freedom of your body, as you so grandly express? Would you? If you crave my pardon, perhaps, who knows, if you promise obedience, I may relent.

JUDAH: I am through with cringing and supplication! My answer is in that burning pile of fagots! See for yourself! (*Judah rushes out door at right. Blaze seen at window. Espania and rest rush out after him. Loud, unearthly shrieking is heard. All return carrying unconscious Judah, showing burnt arms and legs and dress in places.*)

PREJUDICE: Carry him into the next room, the irons are hot; when he is sufficiently revived to be conscious of the pain, you will apply them to parts of his unburned flesh; after you again revive him, take him to the pit, prop him upright in it and let each one aim a stone at him. After that, if he still survives, we will think of other devices. (*All exeunt right, carrying Judah.*)

## THE ADOPTED SON

CHRISTIAN (*Enter centre, looks through window*): And all this accursed work is done in my name! I shall be accused of this inhuman treatment. And there will be those that will believe that Christian sanctioned such infamy, and all because Prejudice chooses to wear my robe. And when he wore the robe of Judah and killed a child he convinced Fanaticism that Judah had committed the crime to use the blood for ritual. And now my name is disgraced, and my aim of enlightenment baffled. (*Shrieks and groanings heard from without.*) Oh, how they torture him! But Prejudice shall not triumph! I will go out, tear my robe from his shoulders, and demand retribution. (*Exit Christian right. Discordant screams for short space. Loud authoritative voice.*) Stop! Cast not that stone! This is Christian speaking, the true Christian! and I forbid — (*Rest lost in indistinct murmurs. Pause.*)

(*Enter right Christian and servants carrying unconscious Judah. Servants lay Judah down and leave at imperious command from Christian. Christian stands looking sadly down, then exits right, head downcast.*)

(*After pause, Judah stirs slowly, sits up. Clothes in shreds. Arms and legs bare and scarred.*)

JUDAH (*Weak voice*): Oh, and I yet survive! Can I not die then? Must I endure more? But they have left me! (*Totters to feet.*) But if I do survive, if I do escape this house, if ever I leave it, I here solemnly swear never to set foot in it again. (*Raising arms above his head.*) May I be cursed as this house is cursed henceforth, if ever I set foot here again, should my very existence depend upon it. Even should they offer me the wealth of the world as inducement. And may this curse strike me down if ever temptation lead me here again.

(*Curtain falls.*)

## FRANCE

### ACT III

*(Curtain rises.)*

*(Large French window at left; wide door in centre, curtained; door at right. Judah sitting alone at table.)*

JUDAH: I cannot believe that this is all true; that I have found peace at last. *(Pacing)* The horrible tortures of Espania's house seem like a nightmare. I wonder how I could have made up my mind to wear that stifling mask of Hypocrisy? But the measures were extreme and I was desperate. Yet I should have known, I, who wish to teach the truth to the world, that truth can not be expounded through living a lie. I cannot even bear to think of it, it moves me so. I have made an oath never to set foot in that accursed house again, even should my very existence depend upon it, and I here make another, that never again will I listen to the voice of Hypocrisy, but fearlessly and openly pursue my object, come what may. I should be content now I have found peace at last. But somehow I feel an indefinable restlessness today. I cannot concentrate on my work, and yet I should be content now. There is no longer anything to interfere with my peace of mind. And yet is my mind disturbed, and all because of a dream. *(Sits down and talks as in a trance.)* A dream that has haunted me for many a day. It was when I was in the house of Prussia, when I had left that of Spain, that I first had this dream. I thought that I saw my mother, my own mother; she looked pale and wan, and she said to me, "Come back



## THE ADOPTED SON

to me, my son. Cease your wanderings in search of a home, and come back to the one where you were born. I am ill, but tended by the care of love will soon come back to health and again make for you the home that only a mother man make." And then I awoke, and found that it was only a dream. But that dream has haunted me ever since. It recurs to my mind sleeping and waking, and always I see her calling me back. Ah, if only I thought that it were true! that she still lives! What wealth would I not leave to return to her! I am harassed by doubts and hopes. Sometimes I wonder whether it may not be true that she still lives. I left her dying, but not dead. Why not go back and ascertain for myself? And yet this is madness! Have I not had enough reports that she is dead? This is but a dream, an empty dream! (*Bows head on hands.*)

ASSIMILATION (*Enter centre, very beautiful girl*): Always dreaming, Judah, always living in the past! That is why you forfeit the present. Here I have come to seek you, to take you to the banquet with me. If your life is unhappy, Judah, you yourself make it so, for you are not sociable. (*Places arms about his neck.*) Come, now, leave your gloominess and come with me.

JUDAH (*Extricating himself from her embrace*): Is it you again, Assimilation? And do you still seek me though I have told you once that I do not care about your banquets? You know I cannot eat the food at your table or drink your wine. I appreciate your efforts to bring me toward a gayer life, but prefer to live my own.

ASSIMILATION (*Draws a chair near Judah and seats herself*): Judah, why do you isolate yourself from everyone else? Why do you build up barriers between yourself and all the other inmates of the house? You have yourself told me that you are following the rules of your book when you refuse to eat at Christian's table. But you have also told



## THE ADOPTED SON

me that there are but ten rules in your book that should be kept; that if these rules were adhered to by all, there would be no strife or unhappiness. Why, then, have you built so many smaller rules around these main rules, which make a breach between you and the rest instead of bringing you nearer, as is the intent of these main rules?

JUDAH: Listen, Assimilation, and I shall explain. If you built a beautiful garden of rare plants, and you wished to take every precaution that no intruders should enter this garden, would you not build a fence around the garden to protect it?

ASSIMILATION: But suppose, Judah, you are in a friendly neighborhood and do not fear that anyone will maliciously spoil the garden, what need then of the fence?

JUDAH: But I must have the fence for protection against myself even, lest I walk sometimes in darkness and not seeing clearly, step into it myself. If the fence is there, though I do not see the rare plants I cannot step in and spoil them. Even nature takes these precautions, Assimilation. Shall I not profit by her example? Did you ever notice that all nuts have shells according to their tenderness? The softer and sweeter the kernel, the harder usually the shell, in order the better to protect it. And around the shell itself is there not a burr? And this burr has sharp points, which hurt the hands when trying to gather the nuts. But is it not there to protect the shell that holds the kernel, in order that the kernel may retain all its sweetness and freshness? If by chance the shell is broken, do you not know what happens to the kernel? It dries up and withers and its sweetness is lost. To keep wholesome the kernel, therefore, we must not break the shell.

ASSIMILATION: Yes, Judah, you are right. But when the nut becomes ripe, does not the burr open and fall off by itself?

## THE ADOPTED SON

JUDAH: Yes, indeed, Assimilation, but that is when the fruit becomes ripe. You must not therefore try to pluck it off before its time, for in so doing you will but prick your hands, and destroy the fruit while it is yet green. This is my analysis of the essence and dogmas of any creed. True, the essence is the kernel itself while the dogmas, such as ceremonials, customs, and the like are but the shell. But the shell is necessary to protect the kernel.

ASSIMILATION: Perhaps you are right, Judah, though I differ with you on this point. I shall not press you, therefore, about coming to the banquet, if you object to eating at Christian's table. But why do you avoid me otherwise? Is not my company pleasant to you? Am I not pleasant to look upon? And I would fain have more conversation with you. Come, let us go out in the garden, where the air is freer and we can discuss more at our ease. (*Taking his hands and drawing him up from chair.*) Am I not agreeable company, Judah?

JUDAH: You are indeed alluring, Assimilation. Yet I have been so often deceived that I have not much faith left in friendship. But I shall go with you, as it will give me an opportunity to escape from depressing thoughts. And I crave for companionship where it does not interfere with my mode of living, and your company is very pleasant. (*Both walk toward French window at left.*)

ASSIMILATION (*Gently trying to take Judah's book*): Surely you will not drag this along with you. It is too cumbersome. (*As Judah protests*) I do not ask you to give it up, only lay it aside for awhile where you can take it again whenever you choose. See, lay it on this shelf. It will be safe, and out of your way. (*Smiling reassuringly.*) There, now you see you can take my arm. I wish to be your friend, Judah, do not doubt me.

## THE ADOPTED SON

JUDAH (*Faltering*): I will only lay it aside for awhile, until we return. (*Assimilation places Judah's book on shelf and taking his arm, coaxes him slowly out. Exeunt Judah and Assimilation left.*)

(*Enter centre Frank and Prussian.*)

PRUSSIAN: What a beautiful home you have, Frank. I do so enjoy a visit to your house. It is only recently that the people in our town have become friendly enough to be neighborly. Formerly each feared the other and avoided him. But I think this new way is to our mutual benefit. There are many products which your garden produces which are not to be had in mine, while we have many tools for gardening and other uses, which you lack. Do you not think this new method a great improvement on the other?

FRANK: Yes, indeed, Prussian. But in such a large town as ours, where there are so many houses and families, it is difficult to know everyone intimately and to realize who are our friends and who are not. That is why we have had this mistrust and segregation.

PRUSSIAN: That is true Frank, but we are close neighbors and should be more intimate. You are welcome to my house any time. There is much that we may discuss together. (*Prussian walks around all this time looking at one thing and another. Looks out of French window at west, left.*) What a beautiful view you have from this window; how lovely the water looks!

FRANK (*Joining him at window*): Why look, there is Judah, the conservative, walking in the garden with a damsel! This is indeed interesting. And see, it is Assimilation! She is an enticing girl and can accomplish with her wiles what others could not with threats and abuse.

PRUSSIAN: Oh, Judah is an inmate of your house now? He has lived in my house also. He is a queer fellow, and though seemingly content, yet went seeking further.

## THE ADOPTED SON

LA BELLE FRANCE (*Enter centre*): Frank, my son,—  
(*Stops suddenly as she sees Prussian.*) Oh, you have a visitor?

FRANK: Yes, mother, you remember Prussian, our neighbor's son!

LA BELLE: Ah yes! (*To Prussian*) You have grown considerably since I saw you last, Prussian.

PRUSSIAN: So, also, has your own son, La Belle France. We are all children before we grow to young manhood.

LA BELLE: Yes, yes. But we do not realize the change when we are with the person growing; it is then gradual. But when we see one after a lapse of time the change impresses us more forcibly.

PRUSSIAN: So it is. Well, I will beg you to excuse me as I must hasten home, but you will come to my house soon, Frank? Au Revoir, La Belle France.

FRANK: I will, indeed, Prussian. Au Revoir! (*Exit centre Prussian.*)

LA BELLE: Have you been friendly with Prussian long, Frank?

FRANK: Why yes, for some time, mother. I often meet him in the public square. Have you any objection to my associating with him? I thought your manner did not seem too well pleased. He said that there were many things that we might interchange, and I thought it a good idea.

LA BELLE: Why, er — yes. That is, you may be friendly with him, but we must be wary in our friendships and not trust blindly. We have a very wealthy house, my son, and if our neighbors feel envious, it would be but natural. When you were very young, and perhaps you do not remember, there was some dispute about the boundary line of our estates. Come out into the garden, and I will show you the place and explain the nature of the dispute. (*Exeunt left La Belle and Frank.*)

## THE ADOPTED SON

JUDAH (*Enter left*): I wonder if I am doing wise by becoming intimate with Assimilation? She says she wants to be my friend and help me solve the problem of my loneliness. But so did Hypocrisy, and where did his advice lead me? And yet it is not right to compare Assimilation to Hypocrisy. Hypocrisy was ugly and his advice foul, while Assimilation is all that is sweet and good. She does not advise me to act falsely, but to abide by the rules of my book and to be open and candid. Oh, why am I also assailed by doubts? Why are the homeless and friendless always the ones abused? Why must they always be on their guard against false friends? When will the strong learn that their strength was given them for the purpose of protecting the weak, not for taking advantage; the wise that their wisdom was given them in order to instruct and guide the unwise, not to mock? Why is it that humanity smiles only on him upon whom Fortune smiles? Does it not know that he who has Fortune's smile stands not in need of others' while he who has not Fortune's smile stands doubly in need of ours? But thus are people beguiled, thinking that if they follow those who have Fortune's smile, a reflection of that smile may fall upon themselves. I am torn between conflicting emotions. I know not what to do. On one hand the memory of my mother and the hope that she is still alive, bid me forsake all and return to my own house. On the other hand, the futility of this idea, the craving for recognition in any house, bids me put all dreams aside and strive for better conditions. I have imagined several times that La Belle France looked favorably upon me. Perhaps, as Assimilation says, if I looked more cheerful, dropped my gloomy attitude, changed my attire—After all, the memory of my mother lies in my heart, not in my dress. I wish to look pleasing in Assimilation's eyes; she is so full of cheer herself. Yes, I will go up and change



## THE ADOPTED SON

into a more elaborate dress before she arrives and I will go to the banquet with her also. I feel the gloom dropping off already. Assimilation is right. It is I who am at fault, not my surroundings. (*Exit Judah right.*)

(*Enter left La Belle and Frank.*)

LA BELLE: Yes, Frank, I think it is time you began helping me carry the burden of responsibility. That is why I explained to you the dissension about the boundary line of our estate and Prussian's. There are still weightier matters with which you must now be acquainted. Yes, I think it is best you should begin to realize the responsibilities as well as the advantages of the home. There is a secret I wish to unfold to you.

FRANK: And you will give me charge of the household affairs, mother? I am serious enough, am I not? I am no longer a child.

LA BELLE: Yes, Frank, you shall be entrusted with the care of our fortune. We have a very wealthy house, my son, and on that account many envious neighbors. But come, that I may get everything in readiness for the banquet. (*Exeunt centre La Belle and Frank.*)

JUDAH (*Enter right, is dressed in French dress elaborate with lace, etc.*): It is not easy to sever ties. I do not feel as lighthearted as I thought I would in gayer clothes. It seems almost as though I were abandoning all that links me to my home, my traditions, everything that I have cherished. . . . Man's life is such a weary struggle. (*Walks to French window and stands looking out to garden.*) I could almost wish I were like the trees we were walking among. They have no care for the morrow; they have no problem of home to solve. Wherever they are by chance planted there is their home as long as they live. If I likewise were rooted as the tree, no wandering from house to house would I then need suffer; no fear of persecution because I have



## THE ADOPTED SON

no strong protection. But then what would life be? Merely existence! Perhaps, because of his material wants, man's life is more complete, for he can also contribute more. For a thought born in a single mind can be given to the world forever. My greatest desire is for a home, and the love of a mother, which I lack. Perhaps because of this very want, and my wanderings thereby I will be of greater service to humanity.

ASSIMILATION (*Enter center, also elegantly dressed*): Oh, Judah, what an improvement. You have indeed done wisely in casting off your gloomy garments. I have good news for you. I have been speaking with La Belle France and she has besought me to recommend to her a trusty servant. She has a great honor and responsibility to confer. And I suggested you, Judah.

JUDAH (*Eagerly*): Did she approve of me, Assimilation?

ASSIMILATION: She has no doubt of your fidelity, Judah, but feared that you would not wish to be molested. She does not want to interfere with your mode of living, and if she has not conferred honor sooner on you, it is only because you have by choice segregated yourself from the rest of the household. I pleaded with her in your behalf, however, explaining how you have decided to lay aside your past and look toward the future.

JUDAH: It is not honor I crave, but the opportunity to prove my devotion, and to gain recognition in the house that shelters me.

ASSIMILATION: She is considering the matter and will be here shortly. I came before with the intention of coaxing you to change into a more cheerful-looking attire, for impressions count so much, but you have anticipated my wish. And now for that name you bear. It is full of gloom and your past troubles and miseries. So long as you have anything to link you to the sad past, you will have a

## THE ADOPTED SON

shadow of that past with you. Let us dispel all shadows and look toward the light.

JUDAH: My name, the only reminder that I am Palestine's son!

ASSIMILATION (*Runs her hands up to Judah's shoulders*): Say that it but a whim of mine which I wish you to indulge. You do not doubt me now? The result of my counsel thus far has been for your good, has it not? I like the sound of Dreyfus better than that of Judah. Let me call you so. What difference does it make?

JUDAH: No, Assimilation, I do not doubt you. (*Puts his arms around her*) It is you I have been seeking for a long time. What I really need is a mediator between myself and my neighbors who do not understand me, and no one can better help me than you. Your presence is so cheerful that when I am with you I forget my sorrows. I will therefore, do all you desire, dear one, and I know I shall be happier for it. (*Assimilation draws herself out of his arms and claps her hands joyously.*)

(*Enter centre La Belle France and Frank.*)

LA BELLE: Oh Judah, you are waiting for me. How different you look in this attire. Your effort to please is appreciated, and emphasizes your sincerity.

ASSIMILATION: Dear La Belle, he has even allowed me to change his name, in the hope of pleasing you. I now call him Dreyfus.

LA BELLE: That is very good. And now Dreyfus, Assimilation has told you somewhat of my plan. What think you of it? Together with my own son, here, I wish to entrust you with the responsibility of watching over our house. I will place in your hands the secret which I want guarded from our enemies. I have chosen you because I believe you honest and trustworthy and I make no conditions other than that my trust be kept inviolate.

## THE ADOPTED SON

DREYFUS: I wish only to prove my fidelity by some act of service for you. You have been as a mother to me since I came to your house. You have given me the freedom of the house, allowed me my own manner of living unmolested, and I wish to prove my appreciation of your kindness. I have no mother, but my heart is hungry for the love of a mother. There is no work too great or too small, that I will not undertake.

LA BELLE: You speak well, my son, and I believe in your sincerity. Go now, Assimilation, and see that all the preparations for the banquet tonight are in progress. It is there that I shall proclaim Dreyfus as my adopted son.

ASSIMILATION: I shall attend to everything. (*Exit centre Assimilation.*)

LA BELLE: And now let me unfold my secret. Draw the curtains and then come and sit here beside me. (*Seats herself in large arm-chair. Both boys draw shades, close French window, and bring chairs close one on each side of La Belle.*)

LA BELLE: There is a secret panel in the wall that holds my dearest treasures. All the neighbors know that I possess these treasures, and they all envy me. But no one knows the hiding place. Madam Prussian, next door, though affecting to be my friend, has always envied me my treasure, as has also the woman named Saxon. They would employ any means to rob me, and very small wonder. My jewels are the most precious in all the world and constitute my entire fortune. Were they stolen, I should be ruined. The care of these jewels I now wish to entrust to you, that you may share with me the responsibility of guarding them from my envious neighbors. Come, I will show them to you that you may appreciate their splendor and worth. (*Goes to wall at back, both boys following her. Touches unseen spring. Panel slides open, disclosing secret vault. Takes*

## THE ADOPTED SON

*out black velvet case and holding it before boys presses spring. Lid flies open disclosing magnificent chain of large sparkling diamonds. Both boys draw a long involuntary breath. Oh!)*

FRANK: Mother, dear, do try them on, that we may behold their full splendor on your beautiful self.

DREYFUS: And make them doubly dear to us for your sake.

LA BELLE (*Smilingly complies and faces boys*): Now, here are two keys. (*To Frank*) Yours, my son, unlocks the west door of our house. (*To Judah*) and yours unlocks the east door. Mine is for the front door. (*Each boy hangs key around neck and hides it under clothes.*)

DREYFUS: For this great trust, I promise to prove worthy. I solemnly give you my word of honor that I will defend your jewels with my life if need be and protect them from all envious neighbors.

FRANK: And I, my mother, as becomes your own son.

LA BELLE: Bless you, my children, I am certain you will. But now let us replace them and go prepare for tonight's banquet. (*Takes off jewels, places them back in box, and presses secret spring. Panel goes back in place.*)

DREYFUS: That spring does not seem secure enough to me. It is too simple and might be easily detected. I believe I could design a better one.

LA BELLE: Well, try if you will. I shall go to prepare now, and you may draw back the curtains again. (*Exit centre La Belle. Boys draw curtains back in silence, then Frank opens French window.*)

FRANK: I shall go out for a while first. (*Exit left Frank.*)

DREYFUS: This is beyond my wildest dreams! Not only to be recognized and tolerated, but to be given a trust. And

## THE ADOPTED SON

I shall prove to her that she did not misplace that trust.

*(Enter centre Assimilation.)*

DREYFUS: Oh, Assimilation, it is to you that I owe all this. You it was that drew me out of my shell of gloom into which I had voluntarily crept. I have risen high in the estimation of the owner of the house and she has entrusted me with great responsibilities. Come, let us go out in the garden for a few minutes before we go to the banquet. See, it is no longer you who seek me, but I who seek your company. You are so beautiful and enticing that you control me absolutely.

ASSIMILATION: I rejoice with you Dreyfus. *(Dreyfus embraces her, exeunt left, Dreyfus and Assimilation.)*

*(Enter left Frank and Prussian after a moment.)*

PRUSSIAN: Who was that who just passed us embracing Assimilation?

FRANK: That was Dreyfus.

PRUSSIAN: Dreyfus? He looked to me like Judah, except that he was dressed differently.

FRANK: Yes, it is Judah, but he has changed his name to Dreyfus since my mother adopted him.

PRUSSIAN: Your mother has adopted him? That is strange. One would think that she was not content with the love of her own son.

FRANK: What makes you think that?

PRUSSIAN: Oh, I merely said it would seem so. But perhaps she has other reasons. Judah is very adroit and knows how to work his way into peoples' confidence. No doubt your mother has some secret she wished to confide to him.

FRANK: She would not confide anything to him that she did not first confide to me.



## THE ADOPTED SON

PRUSSIAN: Nevertheless, I should not wish my mother to give her confidence to another. I should fear that her affection would be transferred.

FRANK: Do you also think so? I could not myself see why she found it necessary to adopt him. Am I not able to take care of all responsibilities without his aid? Did she not think her secrets safe with me alone?

PRUSSIAN: I should not let it disturb my peace of mind. If your mother has given him a trust, he will most likely betray it, and she will drive him from the house.

FRANK: Oh, no! Dreyfus will not betray a trust.

PRUSSIAN: You seem yourself to have great confidence in him.

FRANK: He knows better than to endanger his safety. Besides, he has no motive.

PRUSSIAN: For his safety he might take precautions. As for a motive, for a bribe he might do much. It is not his home and he is not likely to care about the loss it might occasion.

FRANK: He is not likely to be tempted.

PRUSSIAN: In that case he will remain in your mother's eyes perfect in fidelity, and there will be no loss.

FRANK (*Bitterly*): No loss of money. But my mother's love. Is not that a greater loss than any jewels?

PRUSSIAN (*Aside*): Jewels! (*Aloud*) Yet you would not want to lose the jewels in preference?

FRANK: In preference? Is there any question of preference between riches and a mother's love? It is our entire wealth, yet if Dreyfus should betray his trust, and my mother denounce him as a traitor, I would indeed rejoice.

PRUSSIAN: I would like to help you. I do not like to see this Judah rise so impudently. There is no knowing how far his ambition may go.



## THE ADOPTED SON

FRANK: If I only knew of a way. But it is no use, Dreyfus will not betray his trust.

PRUSSIAN: It can however be made to appear that he did, and your mother would then lose her confidence in him.

FRANK: How could that be done?

PRUSSIAN: You might think I have selfish designs if I should tell you.

FRANK: She said she would announce him her son at the banquet tonight. Tell me your plan, Prussian, I will not think you selfish.

PRUSSIAN: There is only one way. If the jewels were stolen by another and you were to swear that Judah was the culprit, your mother would change her plans.

FRANK: What made you say jewels?

PRUSSIAN: Why, you yourself said you would rather lose the jewels than your mother's love.

FRANK: I did not think I said that. But about your plan. There seems to me to be a fallacy. What about the person to whom the secret was betrayed. Would he not exonerate him and proclaim the guilty party?

PRUSSIAN: Not if it were pre-arranged with him, if he were doing this to help you and agreed to say that Dreyfus had delivered the jewels to him.

FRANK: You mean —

PRUSSIAN: That it is a fair bargain. For the possession of the jewels I will clear you of Dreyfus's presence and the menace of his ambition. You said you would rather lose them than your mother's love. Have the jewels delivered to me. After their loss is discovered I will swear that I bought them honestly of Dreyfus and by placing my ring and money in his desk make the evidence complete beyond dispute.

FRANK: What are you asking me to do? I am the only one outside of Dreyfus acquainted with my mother's secret.

## THE ADOPTED SON

PRUSSIAN: So much the better. Your safety will be better assured if you yourself deliver them to me. There will then be no fear in your mind that through remorse or fright the guilty party might confess, thus reinstating Dreyfus and implicating you.

FRANK: No, no, that is impossible. You cannot expect me to betray my own mother. You do not suppose that I would willingly deliver to you the entire fortune of my house?

PRUSSIAN: Would you prefer to see Dreyfus gain first place in your mother's affection and estimation? Tonight at the banquet she will declare him her favorite before all.

FRANK: She shall not do it! She is my mother. I am the son she gave birth to, and I shall be master of my house. My place shall not be usurped by a stranger. He shall not be her favorite. I will prove him false in her eyes and she shall send him back to the obscurity from whence he came. Yes, and with degradation also, that all may believe him unworthy and I be reinstated in my place by right of birth.

PRUSSIAN: And you will deliver the jewels to me! There is no time to lose. I will place the money in his desk and we will leave your mother to discover her loss. You can afterwards say that you saw him having secret conferences with me, and when the money is found among his possession there will be no chance of escape for him, and not the slightest suspicion on you.

FRANK: Yes, the plot is complete. (*Walks toward the panel, falters, turns back.*)

PRUSSIAN: You cannot turn back now.

FRANK: I am afraid, I cannot.

PRUSSIAN: Are you a coward? Think of all that is at stake. (*Frank starts suddenly forward again. Prussian looks nervously around. Frank presses spring. Panel*

## THE ADOPTED SON

*slides open. Takes out box of jewels and holds it forth. Prussian eagerly holds out hands to receive it.)*

FRANK (*Drawing it back*): No, not yet. First place the ring and money in Judah's desk. Also a letter in your own writing declaring that it is the payment for the jewels. Quick!

PRUSSIAN: I have everything ready! See. (*Draws off ring. Takes roll of bills from pocket and holds letter up for Frank's inspection. Places everything in Dreyfus' desk.*)

FRANK: Good, now your word.

PRUSSIAN: I shall vow that I bought them from Dreyfus, and that he offered them to me for sale and delivered them in person. (*Frank hands box to him, which Prussian hides under cloak.*)

FRANK (*mopping his forehead*): Now we must separate. We must not be seen together. Go you out by that door (*left*) and I shall go by this. (*Exeunt left Prussian, centre Frank. Enter left Assimilation and Dreyfus after slight pause.*)

ASSIMILATION: I will go now and dress for the banquet, and will be down shortly to rejoin you. Then, what a triumph we shall enjoy!

DREYFUS: I shall be waiting impatiently for you my fair one. (*Exit centre Assimilation.*)

DREYFUS (*Sighs, looks after her, then goes to desk*): But I have a task to complete before going to the banquet. I must design a safer lock on the secret panel. Let me see, (*takes out paper from drawer in desk, and writes for several moments.*) Ah, I have it. Another inner panel over the vault, identical with the top one, fitted in to appear exactly the same. Then, if the spring should be touched accidentally the secret would not be divulged. The panel slides so noiselessly it would not be noticed.

## THE ADOPTED SON

LA BELLE (*Enter centre*): In what are you so engrossed, Dreyfus?

DREYFUS: I have drawn a diagram of a safer lock to the secret vault. See, this is how it works. (*Traces lines on paper. La Belle looks on over his shoulder.*)

LA BELLE: Let us try it out and see how it works. (*Both go to safe. La Belle opens, finds it empty. Screams. Dreyfus stops speechless.*)

FRANK (*Enter centre; rushing in*): Mother, what is it?

LA BELLE: My jewels gone! all gone! I have been robbed. Robbed by my enemies.

FRANK: By whom?

LA BELLE: How should I know? No one knew of the secret but we three. Dreyfus, I left you here the last and found you here when I returned. Don't you know anything of this disappearance?

DREYFUS: I know nothing. I was out in the garden with Assimilation. But if you suspect me I am willing to be searched. Call in the servants that all may witness if the theft be found on me.

LA BELLE: Let me be calm! I must be calm! No, Dreyfus I do not suspect you. This is the work of my envious neighbors, I but inquire if you know perchance of anything suspicious taking place. And you, my son, have you any suspicion?

FRANK: I have seen many suspicious things take place, but did not wish to make any accusations until my suspicions were confirmed.

LA BELLE AND DREYFUS (*Together*): What have you seen?

FRANK: Do you ask me what I have seen Dreyfus? I saw you meet secretly with Prussian and have a conference with him, during the time you say you were with Assimilation. At first you excited my curiosity, knowing as I do

## THE ADOPTED SON

how very little you mingle with your neighbors. Now I know you to have betrayed the house that gave you shelter and protection.

DREYFUS: It is a lie! I did not even see Prussian! I know not what private reasons you have to lie thus about me, but it will not serve your purpose.

LA BELLE (*Sternly*): What do you mean to infer, Dreyfus?

DREYFUS: He would not thus falsely accuse me unless he wished to evade suspicion on himself. I was with Assimilation all the time, and she will corroborate my statement.

ASSIMILATION (*Enter centre in ball-dress*): What is it, Dreyfus?

DREYFUS: There she is, Assimilation —

LA BELLE: Dreyfus, I will speak to her. Assimilation, a great calamity has befallen me. Answer me truly all I ask you, for upon the veracity of your answers may depend the solution of a mystery and the conviction of the guilty party.

ASSIMILATION: I will answer truthfully all that you ask.

LA BELLE: When you joined Dreyfus, was he alone?

ASSIMILATION: I came in just as Frank was leaving by the garden, and Dreyfus was alone.

LA BELLE: Then what did you do?

ASSIMILATION: We both went out into the garden. We were out quite awhile and when we returned I left him here while I went to dress for the banquet.

LA BELLE: Did you meet anyone while out in the garden? Did Dreyfus speak to anyone?

ASSIMILATION: No, we took the side paths, that are not much frequented.

LA BELLE: But you left him here alone when you went to dress?

ASSIMILATION: Yes.



## THE ADOPTED SON

LA BELLE: That is enough. There was time in the interim for him to see someone.

DREYFUS: But I did not. I was occupied in drawing this diagram until you yourself came back and found me thus.

LA BELLE: I am making no accusation. I wish to be entirely fair. The greatest consideration is the recovery of the jewels and the other the punishment of the culprit. I but wish to sift this matter to the bottom, and I shall spare no one. I shall not judge by small evidence, I must have proof, and I shall find it. Nor are you exempt from suspicion, Frank. The secret was known only to us three and until this matter is solved, you are both prisoners. (*Rings bell violently. Enter all servants.*) There has been a theft in this house and I wish every room in this house searched, including Frank's and Dreyfus's, and all papers brought to me here. — Go! (*Exeunt servants.*)

FRANK: Mother, why do you submit me to this humiliation? They will find nothing in my possession, but by subjecting me to a search you have admitted to your household that you suspect me, your own son, equally with any ordinary thief. As though I could have any motive in robbing myself! Do I not suffer enough by loss, without suffering humiliation also?

LA BELLE: I do not suspect you, my son. I have no grounds upon which to suspect you, but I wish to leave no stone unturned. I am having your room searched also, that our neighbors may not say that you may have done the deed, and that I am shielding you.

DREYFUS: I fear no discovery among my possessions, either, but your suspicion cuts my heart more than any humiliation might. I longed so to gain your devotion along with your confidence. I tried so hard to improve upon your plans besides keeping inviolate your secret. What motive

## THE ADOPTED SON

could I have in betraying the house that gave me protection and shelter? The thought that you think me such a miserable ingrate, pains me more than any fear of danger.

LA BELLE: If you are guilty of no offence, Dreyfus, you shall not lose your place of trust or my respect and protection. But it remains a fact that the jewels are gone and only you and Frank knew of their existence. Ah, here come the servants! (*Enter servants.*)

FIRST SERVANT: Here are all documents found in Frank's room. (*La Belle takes them nervously and looks at Frank who remains serene.*)

SECOND SERVANT: And here are all papers found in Dreyfus's room. (*La Belle takes them and looks at Dreyfus, who is also serene. She examines all papers.*)

LA BELLE (*To servants*): You may go!

FRANK: One moment, mother! Has every place been searched?

LA BELLE: Yes, and thus far I have found nothing incriminating.

FRANK: But you have forgotten the desk which stands in this very room and which you have assigned to Dreyfus.

LA BELLE: That is true. (*To servants*) Search that also.

SERVANT (*Open desk. Exclamation*): Oh! (*All turn and stand aghast, including Dreyfus and Frank. Large roll of bills in full view.*)

LA BELLE (*To Dreyfus*): What money is that, and how came it there?

DREYFUS: I do not know.

LA BELLE: Then I shall find out. (*Goes to desk, takes out bills. Ring rolls to floor. La Belle picks it up and examines.*)

LA BELLE: Ah, Prussian's ring! And do you still deny knowledge of how it came there?

## THE ADOPTED SON

DREYFUS: Absolutely! I am as much surprised as you are. I do not know how it came there.

LA BELLE: Then listen to this, and bear witness all! (*Opens letter and reads. Assimilation has moved toward Dreyfus and put her hand reassuringly on his shoulder.*)

LA BELLE (*Reading*): I hereby certify that I have received from Dreyfus household jewels, for which I enclose twenty thousand francs as full payment thereof. (*To Dreyfus sternly*) What have you to say now?

DREYFUS: Only that I do not understand. I have many enemies.

FRANK: So, you come into my house, and are adopted by my mother; you worm your way into her confidence in order to betray her. You have done a vile and dastardly deed, Judah, and you shall receive fitting reward.

LA BELLE (*To servants*): Go! call Prussian here. (*Exit centre servant.*)

DREYFUS: Judah? Judah? I had almost forgotten that this is my real name! So, that is it? When honors are bestowed upon me, it must not be as to Palestine's son, but as the son of the household, bearing an assumed name.. But when I am accused of infamy, it is no longer Dreyfus that is accused, but Judah, the son of Palestine! Oh, you have done well to remind me that I am her son, Frank, better than you suppose. Had you accused Dreyfus in person, you would have broken his spirit in shame at the disgrace; but when you try to taint my mother's name, you have raised that spirit. Raised it to a height where it will spur me to fight to the last breath that is in me to prove her name clear. To clear it of the slightest taint, and to prove Judah innocent, Dreyfus will sacrifice himself. I am innocent of this great crime, and I will prove it!

LA BELLE: Enough! Here comes Prussian. (*Enter centre Prussian. Frank glances at him nervously.*)

## THE ADOPTED SON

PRUSSIAN (*Bows*): You sent for me, La Belle France. If I can be of service to you, command me!

LA BELLE: Prussian, you have in your possession the jewels belonging to me. Is that not so?

PRUSSIAN: Indeed, La Belle, since they were bought with your approval, I thought that you were well aware of the matter.

LA BELLE: With my permission?

PRUSSIAN: Of which I have adequate proof through these letters here from your confidential servant Dreyfus. (*Handing papers to her*) Read for yourself.

LA BELLE (*Takes paper and reads*): Prussian, I have again held consultation with La Belle in the matter of selling you her jewels, and she has instructed me to dispose of them at the price you offer. If you will come to see me the night of the banquet, I will deliver them to you in person, upon payment of the agreed amount, and written acknowledgment of having received the jewels. . . . Signed, Dreyfus.

DREYFUS: I never wrote nor signed that letter. It is a plot to incriminate me.

LA BELLE (*In commanding tone*): Not another word, Dreyfus! In the face of such excruciating evidence, it will gain you nothing to expostulate. (*To servants*) Take him to the dungeon, disrobe him of all his finery and lock him up securely. You, (*To second servant*) remain outside and keep vigilant watch that he does not escape. (*Servants take hold of Dreyfus.*)

DREYFUS: I ask a last boon!

LA BELLE: I will hear it.

DREYFUS: I crave permission to take my book with me into my solitude. (*La Belle with a motion consents.*)

DREYFUS (*Taking book*): Come, little book! In you I shall find comfort in my solitude, and perhaps, who can tell, a way of solving my innocence.

## THE ADOPTED SON

LA BELLE: Away with him!

SERVANTS: *Come! (Dragging him. Exeunt centre servants and Dreyfus.)*

PRUSSIAN: If you have done with me, madam, I will beg to retire.

LA BELLE: And the jewels —

PRUSSIAN: Are mine. Purchased and paid for in all due form.

LA BELLE: But he was not authorized to sell them.

PRUSSIAN: Which is no fault of mine. Adieu, Madam. *(Bows mockingly and exits left.)*

LA BELLE *(Walking excitedly back and forth)*: I must be alone. In the recess of my own room I can think more calmly. Let no one disturb me. *(Exit La Belle centre.)*

ASSIMILATION: I did not think that he was capable of such lowness. But the evidence seems complete.

FRANK *(Anxiously)*: But there can be no doubt in anyone's mind now, can there?

ASSIMILATION: Certainly not. That is, as matters now stand, and if no new developments occur. Well, I do not know what difference it makes to me. I have other friends. *(Assimilation exits centre but hides behind curtain.)*

ASSIMILATION *(Aside)*: But we shall see.

FRANK *(Draws long breath of relief)*: At last it is over, and everything has worked right. Now I have nothing further to fear, and Judah is out of the way.

PRUSSIAN *(Enter left)*: Ah, Frank, I have been waiting to see you alone.

FRANK: Good Heavens! But we must not be seen together. Go, quick! *(Assimilation watches from behind the curtain.)*

PRUSSIAN: But I must speak to you.

FRANK: But not here. Someone might see us together.



## THE ADOPTED SON

PRUSSIAN: What of that? We have been seen together before. (*Sits down.*)

FRANK: What do you wish?

PRUSSIAN: Well, you see, the truth of the matter is, that having given you all the money I possessed I now find myself in straitened circumstances, and wish merely to ask for a loan. Surely you could not refuse me so small a favor after what I have done for you.

FRANK: But you know I have not any of it. You know my mother has the money that you put in Judah's desk.

PRUSSIAN: Oh, you will find a way.

FRANK: But what if I do not choose to? Is it not enough that you have cheated my mother out of her jewels, without trying to get back the paltry amount you paid for them also?

PRUSSIAN: Be careful of your choice of words, Frank, or your mother may learn who really cheated her out of them.

FRANK: Are you threatening me with exposure? Well, on what grounds could you convince her? You have already given your statement that Judah delivered the jewels to you. You could hardly contradict yourself and still expect to be believed.

PRUSSIAN: You seem to forget the incriminating papers signed Dreyfus but written by you. True, in the excitement of the moment the papers were not very carefully examined, and I took great pains to recover them, but it is possible to have them re-examined, this time more thoroughly.

FRANK: You would not do that?

PRUSSIAN: Not if I receive the loan, but otherwise —

FRANK: And what assurance have I that after I have complied with your request you will not demand more, always keeping those papers over my head? And after I have given you all I possess, that you will not betray me

## THE ADOPTED SON

in the end? It were therefore better that you do so at once, before you have reduced my house to poverty.

PRUSSIAN: Nay, I will deal fairly with you. For half the amount of money that I gave you, I will return to you the papers and you can dispose of them as you see fit. Well, are they worth that to you?

FRANK (*Pacing*): Then bring the papers.

PRUSSIAN: Oh, no. Bring them here and have your servants attack me and take them from me, while you retain both papers and money? No, no, my friend. But you can come and meet me at the little hut by the cross-roads and we can safely make our exchange.

FRANK: Very well, I will come. Go now, in Heaven's name, before someone returns.

PRUSSIAN: Adieu, my dear friend, I will see you again. (*Prussian exits left.*)

FRANK (*Throwing both hands to head*): Oh, I shall surely go mad! What have I done! Oh, what have I done! Why could I not have foreseen his purpose? that he but meant to drain my house of its wealth and reduce us to poverty. But I was so blinded by rage and jealousy at the thought of Judah coming into favor that I could see nothing else. There is but one thing to do now, and that is to recover those papers. I will get two of my most confidential servants to go with me upon this mission and start out immediately. I must prepare at once. (*Exit right Frank.*)

ASSIMILATION (*Enter centre*): So, my suspicions are confirmed! And do you think, Frank, that because you have Judah locked up you are safe? He has friends as well as enemies, as you evidently did not know. Now, you have well set a trap for yourself and you shall yourself give proof of your guilt in this vile plot. Ah, he is returning. (*Assimilation hides behind curtain centre again.*)

## THE ADOPTED SON

FRANK (*Enter right with two servants*): Now, each of you put on one of those black robes and let us be going. Come, give me mine. (*Puts on black robe with cowl over face; both servants likewise. Exeunt left Frank. and servants.*)

ASSIMILATION (*Comes quickly out from hiding*): Good! (*Rings bell rope. Enter centre servant.*)

ASSIMILATION: Go, tell La Belle that I have found a clue to the mystery of her stolen jewels, and that if she will come down at once, we may perchance recover them. (*Exit servant centre.*) I cannot wait, I am all impatience. Courage, Dreyfus! We shall yet have proofs of your innocence.

LA BELLE (*Enter centre*): Assimilation, what have you discovered?

ASSIMILATION: I have heard a plot, whereby the guilty party of your theft is going to purchase back all incriminating papers. Three men dressed in black robes and cowls have gone upon this errand and will return immediately with that which they wish to destroy. Get your servants together, place them in hiding, and leave the house in darkness. Then wait for their return and surprise them red handed.

LA BELLE: But tell me more about this, who are those conspiring, how do you happen to know —

ASSIMILATION: There is no time now. They will be here directly. Let the discovery explain for itself.

LA BELLE: You are right. We must waste no time. (*Rings bell. Enter several servants.*)

LA BELLE: I am about to make a discovery. I wish you to stand around the room which I shall put in utter darkness. Nor shall you make the least sound. When I flash the light soon you are to seize the three men that enter in black robes and cowls and search them thoroughly, and take all papers found upon them. Now, quick, to your posi-

## THE ADOPTED SON

tions! (*Servants take positions at sides of door at left and around walls at La Belle's pointing. La Belle turns off lights. Darkness. Perfect quiet, then footsteps approaching.*)

LA BELLE (*In whisper*): Now ready! (*Enter three robed figures. La Belle turns on light in sudden flash. Servants seize men.*)

LA BELLE: And now we shall see! (*La Belle pulls cowl off first servant, Assimilation pulls cowl off Frank, a servant pulls cowl off third robed figure. Assimilation snatches papers from Frank. Sudden gasping of surprise on both sides. La Belle recognizes Frank.*)

LA BELLE (*To servants*): That is all. Go! (*Servants exeunt centre and right.*)

LA BELLE: What is the meaning of this? Frank, why do you not answer me?

ASSIMILATION: I will answer for him. Here are the letters written to Prussian and supposed to have been written by Dreyfus. Look closely and see if you do not know the writing to be another's. (*La Belle takes letters from Assimilation. Frank draws sword from beneath his cloak and attempts to run it through himself, but is caught by Assimilation and sword wrenched from him.*)

LA BELLE (*Screams*): My son!

FRANK (*Falling on knees before her*): Mother, Oh, my mother! (*Sobs.*)

LA BELLE: Tell me all.

FRANK: I could not bear to see you become so attached to Judah. I feared he would win first place in your affection, and then Prussian tempted me. Oh let me die, mother, I would rather die than bear the disgrace of my guilt exposed.

LA BELLE: My own son! To betray me like this! But do not fear. I shall not denounce you, for to disgrace your

## THE ADOPTED SON

name would be only to disgrace my own. Oh, why did you do this?

ASSIMILATION: And what about Dreyfus? You know now that he is innocent.

LA BELLE: Yes, yes, we shall liberate him. (*To servant*) Go, say that Dreyfus and his guardsman are to come here! (*Exit centre servant.*)

LA BELLE: Take off these black robes and put them out of sight, and let no one interfere with what I say or do on penalty of great punishment. (*Frank and remaining servant take off robes. Servant exits right with them.*)

(*Enter centre, Dreyfus and guard. Dreyfus pale, dressed in Judah's robe.*)

LA BELLE: Dreyfus, in view of your long imprisonment and because I choose to be lenient with you, I have decided to pardon you your great offence, upon condition that you confess your guilt publicly before my entire household and crave my pardon. If you show proper repentance I may even reinstate you in your position of trust.

DREYFUS: Madam, I cannot confess guilt of which I am not guilty.

LA BELLE: You know Dreyfus, there is enough evidence to prove your guilt before the entire town. But you will save yourself the mortification of public trial, longer confinement and ultimate punishment, by a frank confession. You have your choice between freedom and confinement.

DREYFUS: I will not buy my freedom at the cost of disgrace. I will have my innocence proven and proclaimed or you may keep me confined until I die, but you shall never persuade me to save my life by putting a blemish on the name of Judah, Palestine's son. You have my answer, now continue to shield your son at my expense. But you shall not cover up your disgrace with my innocence.

LA BELLE: You have chosen! Take him back!



## THE ADOPTED SON

ASSIMILATION: You know him to be innocent of this crime. Wherefore do you demand a confession? You ordered silence at the cost of punishment. But I shall not keep silent. I also can take unmerited punishment rather than sacrifice the truth. Do not lose heart Dreyfus, I have proof of your innocence and I will have it proclaimed even if I also am locked in confinement. (*Exeunt Dreyfus and guard centre.*) Order him to be released, La Belle France, or I will show the remainder of these letters to all your household and neighbors before you can dispose of me.

LA BELLE: Halt, guard, come back! (*Re-enter Dreyfus and guard.*)

LA BELLE: I have thought better of the matter and in pure forgiveness I release you from your bondage.

DREYFUS: I ask for no forgiveness nor do I accept it. There is only one way in which I will accept my freedom, and that is by having my entire innocence proclaimed.

ASSIMILATION: And I shall proclaim it! (*Rings bell violently, all servants rush in.*) See, here is that which was found on the three black-robed men. All these letters signed with Dreyfus's name, but in the writing of Frank. Dreyfus has been used as a screen to hide another's crime. Know all, that he is innocent, and by every law, both moral and judicial, is free from the long and unmerited confinement that he has undergone. (*Frank escapes unseen, centre.*)

LA BELLE (*Weakly*): And to rectify the mistake I have made, I here before you all, not only re-instate him in his proper place, but raise him to the first in charge of my household. (*Cheers from all servants. La Belle slips from room. Many congratulations follow. Servants exeunt one and two at a time, finally leaving Dreyfus and Assimilation alone.*)

DREYFUS: And, now, my friend, in what manner of words shall I give utterance to my gratitude? There are no

## THE ADOPTED SON

words adequate to express that which I feel. The name of Emil Zola shall live in the mind of Judah forever. 'Tis by that name I choose to remember you, Assimilation.

ASSIMILATION: I will leave you now to pleasant thoughts of a new freedom. (*Exit centre Assimilation.*)

DREYFUS: Yes, leave me awhile, Assimilation. You have saved Dreyfus and have sacrificed much to do so, but Judah would never have been Dreyfus and in this plight had he not followed the advice of Assimilation. I have become greatly attached to you, yet I see now that your friendship though it may be true, is not good for me. For the best of friends may give wrong advice without having wrong intent. Yet do I not regret all this has happened, for it but brings me back to Judah again, and as Judah to the memory of my mother. The memory of my mother, whom I had forgotten for a space, in the admiration of another. Ah, France, La Belle France, how I loved you and love you still, in spite of all I have suffered at your hands. But how could I expect it to be otherwise? He is your son, not I, and it is but natural for a mother to forgive and shield her own son. There, there, again that dream, again, my own mother is becoming me back. (*Judah sits down in same position as when the curtain rose, and in trance again.*)

JUDAH: It is such a beautiful dream, would I could sleep and dream forever and never wake. (*Stretching out hands.*) Mother, mother, how I need you, how I long for you!

(*Curtain drops.*)

## AMERICA

### ACT IV — SCENE 1

*(Curtain rises.)*

*(Outside of home of America. House in centre, well back. Wide verandas all around house. Door in centre wide open. At extreme right, looking out to right, stands Liberty holding torch. At left toward back Farmer is at work. Off to left are seen vast fields of waving corn. In front of house to right stands a round table on lawn with chairs around it.)*

COLUMBIA *(Enter from house, stands in doorway looking around)*: Nobody here? Why where are all my children? *(Looks in window at right)* Ah, yes, there is one at the loom weaving. *(Turns to left and spies Farmer)* and one in the field working at the gardens. *(Enter from right Scholar with books under arm. Goes to table and sitting down opens book and bends over it.)* And one busy over his books studying. All are busy, all thrifty, yet this house is large enough for many more. Therefore I keep my door wide open all the time, that any one may enter when he desires. *(Liberty exits slowly right.)* My children, how I love them all! From all the houses in the town they come to me, to this asylum that I have founded for homeless orphans, and for those who seek the advantages of a larger home when their own become overcrowded. I ask no questions but receive them all alike and derive as much joy in their coming as they do. For, though childless, yet is my heart hungry for child-love, the natural

## THE ADOPTED SON

instinct of woman. And I have benefitted as much from their coming as they have. They have completely changed my house, both inside and outside, both materially and ideally. There is not another house in the town whose gardens are as well cultivated, or where there is more plenty. (*Enter right Italian and Yankee; both talking together.*)

YANKEE: It is no so;—

ITALIAN: But I say;—

COLUMBIA (*Coming down stairs*): What is the trouble?

YANKEE AND ITALIAN (*Together*): He says that — (*Indolence comes slowly out of house rubbing his eyes and yawning.*)

COLUMBIA: Just one moment, one at a time. Now Yankee, what is it? (*Scholar and Farmer both come over to listen.*)

YANKEE: Why, mother Columbia, Italian says that I am not your own son and that he was here before I was born.

ITALIAN: He says that he was here before I was.

COLUMBIA: Well, do not be excited, sit down, and I will explain to you. (*All sit down*) All my children are adopted ones. You have been here long, Yankee, and sometimes forget the time that you quarreled with your own mother, Angel, and then came from her house to mine. But I have only to call you by the name you then bore, Pilgrim, to bring your memory back again.

YANKEE: But was I not the first?

ITALIAN: Was I not here long before?

COLUMBIA: It is true, Italian, that you came earlier. But you did not remain. Having left your home merely for adventure, after a visit to mine, you returned to your own mother; and have come and gone several times since. You do not therefore feel as completely my child as Yankee,

## THE ADOPTED SON

who has never gone back to his mother since he quarreled with her.

ITALIAN: But do we not all bear your name American? Have you not adopted us all as your own.

COLUMBIA: Yes, indeed, all those who ask my protection do I accept as my children. (*Enter left Judah in American dress, arm in arm with Assimilation.*)

COLUMBIA: See, here comes Judah, we will ask him the incidents of his coming here.

JUDAH: Do you mean how long I have resided in your house, Mother Columbia?

COLUMBIA: Yes, and also what brought you to seek the shelter of my protection.

JUDAH: I have been here as long as any.

YANKEE AND ITALIAN: As long as I?

JUDAH: As long as either of you. In fact, I came with both of you, for I have come here many times. If you who had your own homes and mothers found it advantageous to change your abode, can you not realize what a refuge a homeless boy would find this haven? I was in your house, Italian, when you set out to seek new fortunes and accompanied you on your travels of adventure that ultimately brought us to this house. I was also in your house, Pilgrim, when you quarreled with your mother and left her house. I, also wanted freedom of thought, which she would not grant, and left with you for this house. I have been in many houses in my search of a home, and left the barbarous house of Russia only lately, when Superstition falsely accused me of ritual murder, and Ignorance punished me for it. (*Re-enter right Liberty, stands in same position as before.*)

COLUMBIA: And have you found here the haven you sought, Judah?



## THE ADOPTED SON

JUDAH: Dearest mother, I love you more than anyone I have yet called by that name. When one comes to your house, who is the first to greet him? There, (*Pointing*) at the gate stands Liberty, welcoming all alike, homeless and friendless as well as wealthy and powerful. From afar one sees the wonderful torch of freedom that she holds aloft as a welcoming beacon to all. It gladdens the saddest heart, it gives hope to the most despondent; the light seems not only to enter one's vision, but enters one's heart also, and there rekindles the spark of hope that sometimes seems almost dead. For who is too great or too small to love Liberty!

COLUMBIA: My son, your homage to my attempt at welcome more than repays the effort. It is my earnest endeavor to promote the felicity of all those that come beneath my roof. And to that purpose do I present the daughters whom I have adopted to the sons, that their gentle influence and love may tend toward higher ideals, and greater contentment. Justice also is my adopted daughter, as well as Liberty, and I present her to all alike. One of the first rules I have set myself in establishing my house was to the effect that all my children should be given equal rights. Yankee, you were present when I laid that rule. Do you remember its wording, and will you repeat it that all my children may hear? (*Liberty slowly exits right.*)

YANKEE (*Rising*): Yes, indeed, mother Columbia. I wrote it down at your dictation, and I will say it that all the world may hear.

COLUMBIA: Repeat it then, and you my children, listen all.

YANKEE (*Facing audience*): All men are created equal. They are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights; among those are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

## THE ADOPTED SON

COLUMBIA: These words express my sentiments and desires. I wish you all to have freedom of thought and action; that each may be allowed to follow his own pursuits in his own manner. And that is why I give you all a voice in making the rules that govern this house, rather than demand that you submit blindly to my authority over you. Now, listen, my children. I wish if possible to give an example of my impartiality. Do you remember one of the stories in Judah's book, which relates of a father who bestows a beautiful coat of many colors to one of his sons?

ALL: Yes, yes, we have all read it.

INDOLENCE: But he had twelve sons, and gave the coat to one. That was unjust.

COLUMBIA: You are right, Indolence. That story has a purpose and in pondering over it I have come to the conclusion that it is merely an example to parents. It points out the jealousy caused between children by favoring one more than another: It shows the strife and hatred developing from such jealousy and points out the injustice to the other children, when favoring one. Now, I also have a beautiful robe to bestow. But wishing to profit by this example, I intend to give each one an equal opportunity of winning this coat. My coat is the coat of office, and I wish to run a contest for its possession. Each contestant shall study up a lesson that I shall set and then write an essay on it. The best essay shall receive the award. Does this plan meet with the approval of you all?

ALL: Yes, that is fair.

COLUMBIA: And do you all wish to compete?

FARMER: I do not care for the coat of office, I have more important work in the field.

COLUMBIA: Very well, no one need compete, who does not wish to. (*Farmer returns to his work at left.*)

## THE ADOPTED SON

COLUMBIA: The subject of the contest shall be on the law that governs this house.

SCHOLAR: I care not what the subject, I love my books and studies,

JUDAH: The law! that is my birth-right.

INDOLENCE: I abhor studying and working, but I love that beautiful coat, and it would be so very becoming to me too, don't you see. So I think that I will try for it, though the studying will be a beastly bore. (*Laughs from other children.*)

COLUMBIA: Now, children, no foolishness. To your books. I shall give you a limited time in which to work, and at the expiration of that time, I shall collect all essays and judge upon them. (*Scholar at once begins looking over his books. Exit Columbia into house. Judah stands lost in thought.*)

ASSIMILATION (*Goes to Judah*): Are you not going to compete, Judah?

JUDAH: I do not know, I have not yet finished my own lesson.

ASSIMILATION: There is no hurry about your lesson. You can finish that later, any time you please.

SCHOLAR: I shall devote myself to serious work.

INDOLENCE (*Looks off right, back*): Oh, see the boys playing ball, I am going to join them, and will work on my essay later. (*Exit Indolence right back. Others laugh. Assimilation walks from one to the other.*)

(*Curtain drops.*)

## SCENE 2

*(Curtain rises.)*

*(Living room. Door in centre. Bay window centre right. Doors to right and left. Window right, front. Bookcases around walls. Library tables with books discarded over it. All standing, talking excited. Farmer as a spectator.)*

FARMER: Who do you think has won the award?

SCHOLAR: It is hard to tell. Mother Columbia has collected the essays and will be in presently with her decision.

INDOLENCE: My essay would have been as good as any, if I had been given time to finish it. But it was only half-done when Mother Columbia collected them. I do not think that was fair. Everyone should have been given the opportunity to finish.

ASSIMILATION: But, Indolence, you were given as much time as the others, and if you had not spent your time at the games, you might have finished as well as the rest.

INDOLENCE: Well, but one cannot study all the time. And yet, that coat would have looked as well on me as on anyone. *(Judah is standing alone at left.)*

ALL: Ah, here comes Mother Columbia.

COLUMBIA *(Enter centre; rolls in hands tied up, and robe over arm)*: Sit down, all my children, and I shall tell you my decision. *(Columbia seats herself and others group themselves about her.)* My children, I have carefully and conscientiously examined these essays, and to the best of my ability and knowledge, have made my decision from merit only. You, my children, are all dear to me to the

## THE ADOPTED SON

same extent; there are no greater ties to bind me to one than to another, and I therefore feel no partiality. There are many other awards to be won by those who wish to work, and are deserving, so that my presenting this robe to one need not make the rest of you feel in any way the losers. I therefore make my presentation before you all, in the full conviction that I have been perfectly fair in my choice of the best essay, and have chosen by merit only. The best essay, and therefore the one that wins the robe, is the one written by, — (*All bend forward*) — Judah. (*Judah bends forward also, but does not stir.*) Come forward, Judah, and receive your award. (*Assimilation places hand on Judah's shoulder, and he rises slowly.*)

PREJUDICE: Judah has not earned the award; he has cheated and copied and I can prove it.

JUDAH (*Taking step toward Prejudice*): Prejudice! you in this house also? Pray, how did you gain admittance into this house where Ignorance is barred? Ah, but so it is, the son outlives the parent. Mother Columbia, this accusation against me is false, and I demand that Prejudice produce proof of the guilt that he professes to know of. I demand Justice of you, you cannot deny her to me.

COLUMBIA: Calm yourself, Judah, you shall have Justice. If you are not guilty of any misdemeanor you shall receive that coat as has been promised. There shall be no discrimination.

INDOLENCE: So Judah cheated? And I was not even allowed to finish my essay!

JUDAH: Mother Columbia, it is no longer a question of the award, it is now a question of honor. See, at the windows are all our neighbors looking on, and prepared to scoff or applaud as the case may be. I will have Justice, I ask no more.



## THE ADOPTED SON

SCHOLAR: Judah is right, if he has not cheated, he should be given his due. I also worked hard at my essay, and realize the injustice of losing a well earned reward.

ASSIMILATION: I have been with Judah during all the time that he was writing and can vouch for his integrity. There was no cheating and he who says there was, lies!

COLUMBIA: Order! I am mistress of this house, and you must let me judge in this case. It is the rule of my house in case of dissention to call in Justice.

JUDAH: Justice! Justice! it is you I am calling. Can you not hear me, Justice?

JUSTICE (*From outside door at centre, behind Prejudice*): Who calls me?

JUDAH: She answers! It is I, Judah. You should know my voice by now. I have called for you so many times, and alas, so many times in vain.

JUSTICE (*Appearing behind Prejudice*): Yes, yes, Judah, but it is not my fault that I cannot come to you. I am blind, and someone stands in my way.

JUDAH: Yes, and it is always the same one. Prejudice! See, how he bars her way.

COLUMBIA: Stand aside Prejudice, and let Justice enter. (*Goes over and pushes Prejudice aside, and taking Justice by the hand leads her to centre of stage.*) Now in your scales, Justice, we shall weigh the merit of these essays, for they are the most accurate scales in all the world. (*Places essays one at a time in scales. Judah's weighs the most.*) Judah's essay weighs the most in merit and honesty, and the coat of Office is his. (*Places Justice's robe on Judah, then turns to others*) And this is my final decision. (*Exit Prejudice centre.*)

JUDAH: My mother, I thank you. You will understand that my love for you is not lessened by the worship of the mother that gave me birth. I could not be true to you, if

## THE ADOPTED SON

I did not uphold her name and honor. I pledge the same allegiance to you, and will give my very life if need be to protect your honor always.

COLUMBIA: I could neither have respected nor trusted you, had you done otherwise, and I know you will do credit to your award. I leave you with Justice. (*Exit centre Columbia.*)

INDOLENCE: Idiotic Prejudice! Could he not have finished as well as he began? I shall not stay to witness Judah's triumph. (*Exit left Indolence.*)

SCHOLAR: Judah, I congratulate you upon your success, though I had hoped myself to wear that coat. However, there are more coats, and I shall yet have one, and again meet you.

JUDAH: Scholar, I thank you. I know that your congratulation holds no envy, and you will surely yet win a brighter coat than this one, since you will have no Prejudice to overcome. (*Exit right Scholar.*) And now Assimilation must I thank you for your defence. You have perhaps meant to serve me, yet was our friendship a mistake. The mistake was mine, however, for not to you can I look for the solution to my problem. There is a little story in my book, which tells of an older son who sold his birth-right to his brother, for a mess of pottage. I never entirely understood that story until now. You see, the oldest son had been out hunting, and was hungry, and hunger cares not for blessings, which is all a birth-right gives. It wants pottage, and therefore he thought he was getting the better bargain by the exchange. But after his hunger was appeased, and he found that he had sold his blessing, a thing everlasting, then did he feel great regret. As I have said, I never really understood the interpretation of that story until now. I am the oldest son. The law is my birth-right. But I have been out hunting, and I have been very

## THE ADOPTED SON

hungry, hungry for a home, for the love of a mother, and for recognition. And I have been almost on the point of selling my birthright for a mess of pottage. I laid aside the Book of Law, for the Judicial law, for I thought that I would attain what I craved by recognition. But that is mere pottage; it satisfies the hunger, but have I sold my birth-right? No! I am going back to the Moral law.

ASSIMILATION: I understand that you wish to enjoy your success by yourself, and shall leave you to pleasant thoughts. (*Exit centre Assimilation. Judah goes to shelf takes own book.*)

JUDAH: Ah, my little book, you are covered with dust. I have left you on the shelf a long time. (*Opens*) Yes, so long that I have even forgotten how to read you. The writing is no longer familiar, and I have become alienated from you. An alien to all, an alien even to myself! But I shall study your pages again, until you once more become familiar to me, for it is only through your pages that I can find my way back to my mother. I had forgotten that I was Judah in my prosperity, but my trouble sent me searching for my mother. That is the natural instinct of every human being. Some of the writing I still remember. Ten rules only you said I should follow, and bid my fellow-being follow for their own good. I had often wondered at the order in which those rules were placed. Thou shalt not covet! That rule you placed last. Now it has always seemed to me that if that one rule were placed first, there would be no need of any of the other rules. If we did not covet, we could not kill, we would not steal, nor commit adultery. And it seemed to me that the order was wrong.

But I see now that I was wrong. It must come last, for it comes last in the natural order of things. Man could not accept the Moral Law all in one command; his mind is too finite.

## THE ADOPTED SON

It must be led up to it by natural steps, and these degrees must be given in decisive form, possible to be enforced by Judicial law. Then when the mind of man has acclimated itself to these steps, it is prepared for the conception of the one and only law that cannot be enforced, except by itself. Thou shalt not covet. Then when that law will have become enforced on the minds of men, there will be no more need of the others, they will take care of themselves. And you, Justice, will then be cured of your blindness, and will be able to see all alike. There will be no more bandage before your eyes, and no one shall again be able to stand in your path, for only through the minds of men can you be cured. (*Taking Justice by the hand, turns to window right.*) And there, there in the east, where I have turned my eyes from every house in all my wanderings, is the light I have so long looked for, and which tells me my mother lives, that it is a dream no longer, but a reality, and my heart yearns toward her, for she is calling me. And I will take you home with me to my mother, and you shall live with us always; and I will present you to all alike, to all that come within my doors, and will aim always for the enforcement of that law which shall tear the veil from before your eyes. (*Song by Judah, Hatikvoh.*)

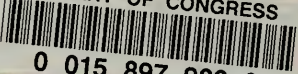
(*Curtain falls.*)









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